



UNITED NATIONS PACIFIC STRATEGY FUND

ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT

JANUARY - DECEMBER 2022



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ACRONYMS

APSACC	Australian Public Sector Anti-Corruption Conference
CRVS	Civil Registration and Vital Statistics
CSE	Comprehensive Sexual Education
MCO	Multi-Country Office
FICAC	Fiji Independent Commission Against Corruption
FEL	Family Life Education
FSM	Federation State of Micronesia
FSRS	FOC Sub-Committee on Regional Security (FSRS)
MISC	Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey
NACS	national anti-corruption strategies
NZ	New Zealand
PACJN	Pacific Anti-Corruption Journalists Network
PCRN	Pacific Civil Registrars Network
PICT	Pacific Island Countries and Territories
PIFS	Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat
PINA	Pacific Islands News Agency
PPSCs	Pacific Public Service Commissions
PUNO	Participating United Nations Organisation
RC	Resident Coordinator
RMI	Republic of Marshal Islands
RTI:	Right to Information
SOI	Solomon Islands
SPC	Secretariat of the Pacific Community
UN	United Nations
SRHR	sexual and reproductive health and rights
UNCAC	United Nations Convention against Corruption
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
UNPRAC	UN Pacific Regional Anti-Corruption Project
UNPS	United Nations Pacific Strategy
USPSA	University of South Pacific Students Association
UNSDCF	United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework
USP	University of the South Pacific
WILS	Women In Leadership in Samoa
WHO	World Health Organisation

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The United Nations is sincerely grateful to the Government of New Zealand for investing in the UN Reform and the five-year United Nations Pacific Strategy (UNPS) by setting up the UNPS Fund. In establishing the UNPS Fund to mobilise the Pacific Partnership, the Government of New Zealand recognised the capacity, reach, and role of UN agencies and affirmed the idea that the UN will be an even better development partner when its UN agencies work together seamlessly in Multi-Country Offices and Regional Teams. The invaluable vision and contribution of the New Zealand Government have been instrumental in shaping the UN efforts in the Pacific.

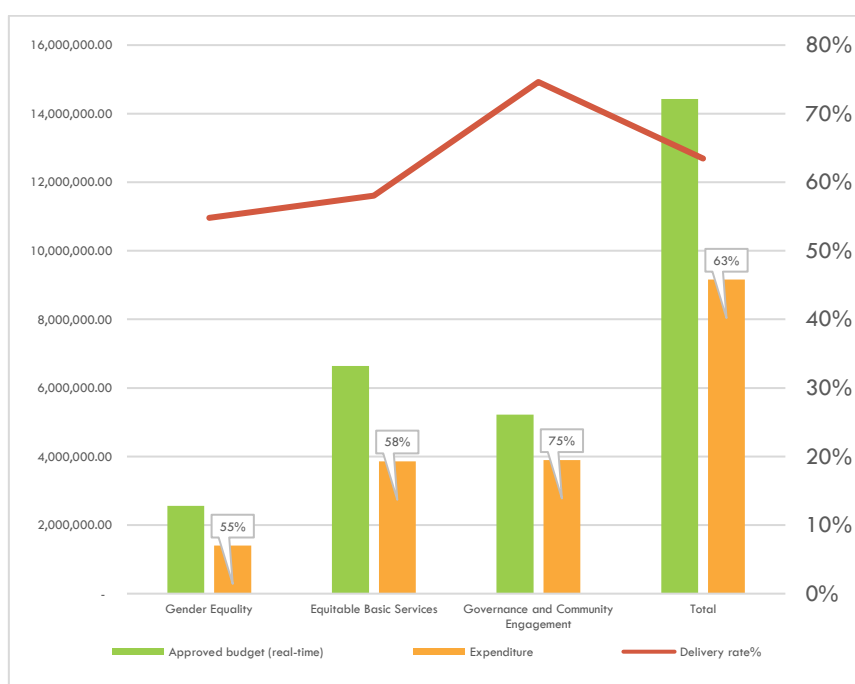
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The UNPS 2018-2022 is the five-year framework that supports the localisation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) in the Pacific. It includes six outcomes, namely 1) Climate Change and Disaster Resilience, 2) Gender Equality, 3) Sustainable and Inclusive Economic Empowerment, 4) Equitable Basic Services, 5) Governance & Community Engagement, and 6) Human Rights.

This annual progress report of 2022, the third of its kind, presents a summary of the progress, key results, and main achievements of UNPS Funded Outcomes 2, 4, and 5 by the New Zealand Government and implemented by the designated UN agencies, namely UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNODC, and UNWOMEN.

The UNPS Fund has generally recorded good progress towards the Pacific Strategy outcomes on *Gender Equality*, *Equitable Basic Services*, and *Governance and Community Engagement* funded by New Zealand in 2022. This is despite the fact that the COVID-19 pandemic, geopolitical and operational obstacles, contextual shifts as well as other external factors demanded for significant work planning adaptation and continued to affect smooth Implementation and delivery of programmes. These included general elections in some target island countries and election postponement in some others, reopening of borders and internal transitioning within some implementing agencies.

Chart 2. Cumulative Delivery as at End 2022



Major achievements of the project during the reporting period include, but not limited to the followings:

- *Enhanced partnerships with Ministries including the Ministry of Health, Education, Youth, Women and Culture have facilitated prioritisation of youth Sexual Reproductive Health and*

increased level of commitment of the Government Departments and Ministries to leverage their collective strengths to better serve the interests of young people in diverse settings.

- Enhanced a more conducive, effective, and inclusive environment for the women market vendors to voice and plan together with the duty bearers of the municipal market.
- Development and launch of the Anti-corruption Women's toolkit as the result of scaling up the Youth and Women's business integrity work.
- Strengthened evidence-based plans, systems, curricula, and teacher training for Early Childhood Education (ECE) and expanded access to ECE services across the targeted island countries.
- Expanded access to high-impact nutrition interventions (HINI) across the targeted countries.
- Enhanced immunization rates of children during the Covid-19 through supplementary measles vaccination and provision of further vaccine logistics, planning, coordination, storage, monitoring and service delivery, including the instillation of cold chain equipment in the target island countries.
- Significant enhancement in the Birth registration data, including the disaggregation of home births and hospital/clinic births by location since the roll-out of the electronic BR system in early 2022.
- Good progress towards shattering the taboo that barred discussing corruption through various initiatives such as provision of learning opportunities and awareness raising, international and regional knowledge exchange, strategic partnership with NZ Fale initiative, holding anti-corruption conferences, etc.
- Based on article 8 of UNCAC, increasing recognition by the Public Service Offices in the region of the need to develop comprehensive systems to help ensure that the public sector abides by good governance principles including transparency, accountability, openness, effectiveness, and efficiency.
- Increased uptake of the Right to Information regime in the region.
- Enhanced enabling census data collection during the pandemic as the result of collaboration on Computer Assisted Personal Interviews (CAPI) and geo-referenced technology is a game changer that allowed for transfer of knowledge to countries, including capacity building, the adaptation of tools to each country's context, and decreased the time gap between data collection and data availability.
- Development of a set of knowledge products including the monographs on youth, disability, gender equality from the Census data as well as deeper analyses reports on Sexual Reproductive Health and Domestic Violence from Samoa, Tonga and Tuvalu and many more to inform advocacy and programming in the Pacific.
- Enhanced and active cooperation and dialogue with the CROP agencies in a more structured and sustainable fashion.
- Enhanced synergies across programmes and stakeholders as the result of investments in nurturing diverse partnerships.

Initiatives are underway and/or already taken to ensure sustainability of the interventions beyond the programme life. These include, among others:

- ✓ Development of the sustainability plan for the market vendors associations.
- ✓ Strong partnership and working relationship with SPC having helped SPC to strengthen its support to the countries ensuring institutionalisation of the Census and MICS efforts through the regional data collection plan of the Strategic Framework for Pacific Statistics 2022-2030.
- ✓ An investment in partnerships including the in-country partnerships with Civil Society, communities and key target audience (for example, the young people for CSE/FLE, youth friendly guidelines and services) so that initiatives are contextualized, remain relevant to the

Pacific island countries and are owned by the Government as well as with the regional technical institutions such as the Family Planning Australia to ensure international standards are met is an ideal combination to sustain the gains consolidated during the life of the project.

- ✓ *Established coordinated regional approach in addressing corruption - as a crucial element of corruption to be rooted into a regional body - “outlives projects” and “owned and driven” by the Pacific. The approach ensured sustainable and coordinated leading of anti-corruption - noting high turn-over of personnel both on the counterpart and technical assistance side - rather than associated with specific individuals.*
- ✓ *Strong established partnership supports ministries' visions to fully integrate the Early Childhood Education (ECE) subsector within education sector planning processes, ensuring well-resourced ECE subsectors in the target countries, supporting the long-term sustainability of ECE programmes and ensuring dedicated budgets. In the process of developing ECE subsector plans, countries are identifying priorities and strategies addressing five core functions that need to be developed specifically for ECE. Evidence-based decision-making to ensure equitable access to and participation in quality programmes, especially for young children with a disability or in vulnerable circumstances, underpins the specified core functions*
- ✓ *Passing the Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (CRVS) Act amendment bills in parliament and continued training, setting up and a full roll-out of the new CR online system as priorities in Kiribati and Solomon Islands. The implementation of key recommendations in Birth Registration processes are being prioritized in Samoa and Vanuatu.*

The status of programmes/project during the reporting cycle demands for consideration of a no-cost extension to ensure completion of the programmes/projects in an efficient, effective, and seamless fashion is required.

BACKGROUND

[THE UNITED NATIONS IN THE PACIFIC](#)

There are 26 resident and non-resident UN agencies serving Pacific Island Countries. The UN Multi-Country Offices (MCOs) in the Pacific, in Fiji, Micronesia and Samoa, is led by three Resident Coordinators and engaged by a Joint UN Country Team linked across three regional hubs, that is operating regionally.

FIJI MULTI COUNTRY OFFICE	MICRONESIA MULTI COUNTRY OFFICE	SAMOA MULTI COUNTRY OFFICE
Fiji	Federated States of Micronesia	Cook Islands
Solomon Islands	Kiribati	Niue
Tonga	Republic of the Marshall Islands	Samoa
Tuvalu	Nauru	Tokelau
Vanuatu	Palau	

All UN agencies in the Pacific are members of the Joint UN Country Team (UNCT), contributing to the achievement of the UN Pacific Strategy (UNPS) 2018 – 2022, operating as “One UN” and offering wider support to the regional goals and national development aspirations across the Pacific.

[THE UN REFORM](#)

The UN Reform, centering on key areas of development, management and peace and security, aims at achieving the 2030 Agenda and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF). The process is led by UN Resident Coordinators who lead and coordinate all UN Agencies - with different comparative advantages – to increase efficiency, transparency, synergy and improve delivery of the UN mandate across the board.

The Reform includes 1) *the use of UN Country Teams and Development Cooperation Frameworks*, 2) *a system of Resident Coordinators to provide overarching leadership to all UN agencies in-country*, 3) *shared business services and back-office functions*, 4) *the use of regional strategies*, 5) *a call for improved transparency, accountability, and objective evaluations*, and 6) *the use of partnerships, fund raising, and a strategic approach to the 2030 Agenda*.

[THE UN PACIFIC STRATEGY \(UNPS\) 2018 - 2022](#)

The UNPS 2018-2022 is the five-year framework that supports the localisation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) in the Pacific. It includes six outcomes, namely 1) *Climate Change and Disaster Resilience*, 2) *Gender Equality*, 3) *Sustainable and Inclusive Economic Empowerment*, 4) *Equitable Basic Services*, 5) *Governance & Community Engagement*, and 6) *Human Rights*.

All UN organisations are encouraged to actively contribute to the achievement of the outcomes of the UNPS. The UNPS notably ensures that the work of the UN complements that of regional organisations, including the members of the Council of Regional Organisations in the Pacific (CROP)¹ and others.

The UNPS was evaluated in late 2021-early 2022 to assess achievements and inform the design of the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF), the UN’s strategic plan for

¹ Council of Regional Organisations of the Pacific include the Pacific Aviation Safety Office, Pacific Islands Development Programme, Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency, Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, Pacific Power Association, Pacific Community, Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme, South Pacific Tourism Organisation, and the University of the South Pacific.

the region for 2023-2028. While there were many findings, the most notable for the UNPSF were that the performance of the UN Coordination structures has improved and the establishment of a fully-fledged UNPSF should be pursued.

[THE PACIFIC UNITED NATIONS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION FRAMEWORK \(UNSDCF\)](#)

The Pacific UNSDCF 2023-2027 - (*hereafter referred to as the “CF”*), which is finalised in 2022, outlines the UN development system’s support towards the achievement of the SDGs in the Pacific.

Aligned with the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent, which was endorsed by the region’s leaders in June 2022, it captures the high-level outcomes to be achieved over the next five years with the UN’s contribution. The change pathways of the CF have been articulated around the 2030 Agenda’s main pillars, and comprise **Planet, People, Prosperity, Peace** and with **Partnership** as an enabler. Country Implementation Plans (CIPs) defines the UN development system’s contribution to each country by adapting the outcomes of the CF at the national level. The CIPs, capturing biannual UN activities in each country, are being developed through a country-led process and will be finalised by early 2023.

[THE UN PACIFIC STRATEGY FUND, ITS FUNCTIONS AND PROGRAMMATIC SCOPE](#)

The New Zealand – United Nations (NZ-UN) Pacific Partnership represents a strong commitment by the Government of New Zealand to accelerating the UN Reform vision in the Pacific. NZ’s investment in the pooled financing mechanism, the UNPS Fund, seeking to combine the UN’s value add in three key areas of work in the Pacific.

The UN Pacific Strategy Fund (UNPSF), established as multi-party trust fund, is a collaboration between the UN working in the Pacific, led by the UN Resident Coordinators in Fiji, Micronesia and Samoa Multi-Country Offices (MCOs), the Government of New Zealand as the initial donor to the Fund, and the Participating UN Organisations (PUNOs)². Funding support from New Zealand, originally set to conclude on 31 December 2022, has been extended to 30 June 2023.

The UNPSF has provided funds to deliver the UN’s regional strategy, UNPS 2018-2022 aiming to support the following areas:

- a) **Development impact:** to facilitate investment in priority development needs, as agreed with Pacific governments, and to enable demonstrable development impact;
- b) **Coherence:** to support coherent implementation of the UNPS, ensuring alignment with Delivering as One standards;
- c) **Cooperation:** to enhance cooperation and collaboration among internal and external stakeholders (including Pacific Regional organisations) and to maximise complementary expertise and mandates to deliver the UNPS, including leveraging of resources;
- d) **Cost and Risk Reduction:** to enhance efficiency and reduce transaction costs, including information, coordination and administrative costs, through joint activities, partnerships and resource mobilisation; and
- e) **Delivery as One UN:** The Fund supports UN Reform and aims to incentivise participating UN agencies to work closely together on joint programming under the leadership of Resident Coordinators.

As multi-party trust fund to support the implementation of the UNPS and its outcomes, the Fund supported three outcomes including **Outcome 2: Gender Equality**, **Outcome 4: Equitable Basic Services**, and **Outcome 5: Governance and Data/MISC**, as the agreed outcomes to be supported by the Fund, implemented and delivered results by the five PUNOs through joint programmes.

By encouraging UN agencies on joint programming and working collaboratively led by Resident Coordinators, the Fund has increased the likelihood of realisation of the outcomes of the UNPS

² currently UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNODC and UN Women

2018-2022 and supported achievement of the results of UN interventions in holistic and sustainable fashion.

When agencies with different strengths cooperate to achieve the same goal, synergies, both predictable and unexpected, are created. The objective of the Pacific Partnership and the UN Reform is to *maximise the value of the investment made in development by efficiently delivering support that is carefully designed to address multiple priorities across the board.*

CONTEXTUAL SHIFTS AND IMPLEMENTATION STATUS

The main obstacles and contextual shifts that affected smooth implementation of the joint programmes and projects during the reporting period are as follows:

➤ Geopolitical

- ✓ General elections in Cooks, Nauru, Papua New Guinea, Vanuatu and Fiji. The last two ones brought major political changes.
- ✓ Significant changes in the anti-corruption landscape that could include: reform of the public service and change in leadership in key commissions/authorities; Parliament enhanced scrutiny or retroactive request for missing annual report [*example of the failure to lodge annual report by the Fiji Independent Commission Against Corruption (FICAC) for the last 4 years*]; heightened scrutiny in dealings undertaken by the previous administration which could lead to prosecution, delays or on the contrary acceleration for national anti-corruption strategy development/implementation, halt to existing anti-corruption policies/initiatives.
- ✓ Major Political events that affected the region and the geo-political environment, including the postponement of the elections in Solomon Islands to 2024, the removal of the Chief Justice and High Court judges in Kiribati and ransom cyber-attack in Vanuatu. While those are not directly corruption-related they have a potential of influencing the environment in which corruption can thrive by affecting the rule of law. It is in this particular context, that the 6th Media Summit was held in Honiara, recognising the key role of independent media in providing contextual and critical information which balance out messages from state-controlled entities. In Solomons, as it is also the case in various other countries in the Pacific, local media outlets have the highest level of online penetration, engagement and internet connectivity and social media use are growing rapidly.
- ✓ Transitioning of UNFPA – at global level – towards its new Global Strategic Plan 2022- 2025 that calls to accelerate efforts, transform programmes, and motivate new partners to prioritize the needs of people left furthest behind - *with an increased focus on the rights and inclusive participation of women, adolescents and youth as agents of change* – that are reflected in UNFPA Pacific's 7th Multi-country Program (2023-2027). The geographic focus will continue to be in all 14 PICTs but recognizing the diversity within the region with an emphasis on tailor-made support to each PICT.

➤ Operational

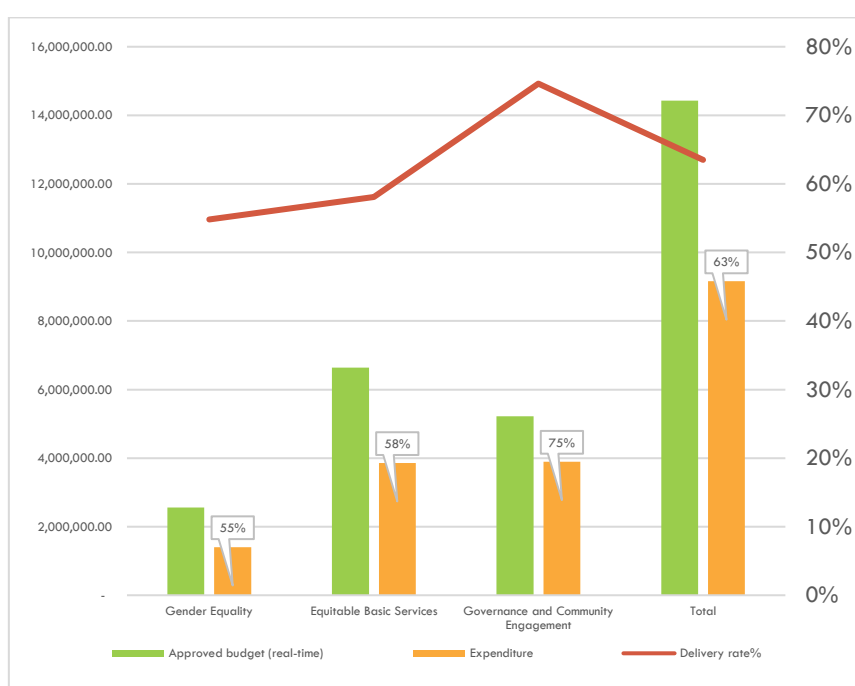
- ✓ Reopening of the borders without restriction in a great number of Pacific countries. This brought about greater opportunity to re-engage in person but also a renewed pressure on staff and capacity restricted administration to engage with issues that had been de-prioritised during the Covid crisis and to attend numerous face-to-face workshop/seminars abroad. While travel bans to the target countries were lifted, operational constraints such as delays in obtaining visa adversely impacted meeting with stakeholders (example of participating in relevant events in New Zealand or USA).
- ✓ COVID-19 and its effects continued to challenge implementation with limited and/or no possibility of travelling. This was while both Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) and Republic of the Marshal Islands (RMI) experienced a significant spike in COVID-19 cases in 2022. The situation was particularly worrisome in RMI. Within four weeks after the first

community transmission was detected in the capital city of Majuro in August 2022, more than 15,000 COVID-19 confirmed cases with 17 deaths were reported to the World Health Organisation (WHO).

- ✓ Limitations of virtual engagements continued to create issues for the 1st half of the year; however, more face-to-face interactions were picked up in the 2nd half of the year.
- ✓ Unforeseen delays in the processing and compilation of birth registration data due to cyber-attack on Vanuatu’s online government networks in 2022.

Despite contextual shifts and emerging challenges, the PUNOs remained fully dedicated to meet the set targets, adjusting the programmes/projects to the emerging circumstances to achieve the expected results and responding to new demands. The overall targets have been either **achieved** or **progressing** during the reporting period (*January to December 2022*). While **Annex I** of this report provides comprehensive Financial Report of 2022, the following graph provides a snapshot of the delivery percentage per outcomes.

Chart 2. Cumulative Delivery as at End 2022



RESULTS AND ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE FUND

While detailed information on the achievements of the initiatives, joint programmes/projects supported by the UNPS Fund – New Zealand (*including disaggregated data, charts, tables and photographs*) is provided in the full reports of the Participating United Nations Organisations (PUNOs) as attached in **Annex II** to this report, the summary of progress and key results achieved by each initiative are captured in the sections here below.

Noteworthy to indicate that many more initiatives - under each outcome - have been taken throughout the year 2022 by individual PUNOs that are captured in the **Annex II** to this consolidation. Such outcome level results and achievements will be reported in the next reporting cycle.

OUTCOME 2: GENDER EQUALITY

By 2022, gender equality is advanced in the Pacific, where more women and girls are empowered and enjoy equal opportunities and rights in social, economic, and political spheres, contribute to and benefit from national development, and live a life free from violence and discrimination.

UNWOMEN – Markets 4 Change in PICTs and Women In Leadership in Samoa (WILS)

- Women market vendors have built capacities of 113 women and enhanced a more conducive, effective and inclusive environment for them to voice and plan together with the duty bearers of the municipal market. The training opportunities have also improved their capacities and enabled them to address some of the challenges for the market vendors in Kadavu in better understanding the market By-laws and the Market Vendors Association constitution. The established network of women market vendors - through bi-annual governance meetings - has availed a solution-oriented platform for the market vendors associations and market managers for further deliberations and sharing lessons learned, best practices and discuss practical ways of addressing the challenges.
- The women market vendors are also recognised by the Government as enabled representative groups that drives genuine dialogue on inclusive social, economic and political spheres of markets. This was convened in a national governance meeting – for the first time in Samoa– with the Government, key stakeholders and donors during which they have been provided with the opportunity to discuss and provide their inputs in the areas pertaining to the operations and management of the social, economic and political spheres of markets.
- Provision of various training opportunities for improved socio-economic security of approximately 300 market vendors (178 women, 122 men, 15 youth, 4 people living with disability & Household Approach -28 couples , 3 village Headmen) in a variety of skills including financial literacy, business management, value addition and organic farming practices that resulted in increased business and financial skills such as improving in savings³, improved digital literacy such as using online platforms for marketing and strengthening their small businesses, improved access to information and services, increased economic and sustainable livelihoods through improved climate change resilient agricultural practices, value-adding techniques as well as gained knowledge on agricultural pest and disease, soil care and plant nutrients.
- Towards improving market structure and operating systems in Kadavu and Samoa for more gender-responsive markets, opportunities provided for the women market vendors in different areas such as consultation meetings with market vendors association members, joint site visit missions with multi-stakeholders - *as the first of its kind in Samoa* – by including the Government of Samoa, development partners and the donors in the planning and development of infrastructure plans under the project that resulted in formalising a programme for construction of the new Savalalo Flea Market, which currently lacks facilities and provisions for women and children’s restrooms and ablution blocks.

OUTCOME 4: EQUITABLE BASIC SERVICES

By 2022, more people in the Pacific, particularly the most vulnerable, have increased equitable access to and utilisation of inclusive, resilient, and quality basic services.

- In FSM and RMI, initiatives taken on the sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) including successful engagement with the Ministries and Departments of Health and Education, identifying champions from and within the system, developing an understanding of the complementarity in their work to provide a continuum of education, support and services to young people and Government’s ownership of the agenda of youth health and well-being, resulted in adapting the international standards – by UNFPA - to country context and investing in the in-country capacities to own and sustain the SRHR initiative through regional and in-country partnership.
- Investments in diverse partnerships with the Government, civil society, regional technical organisations, community members and young people have yielded rich dividends in terms of co-creating an enabling environment for youth SRH concerns in FSM and RMI. The political will

³ 20 women (out of the 178 women) have improved savings, as Kadavu does not have a Bank, 30 women have improved digital access, and 35 women have diversified agriculture products to value adding initiatives as the result of the agriculture trainings.

and commitment at senior levels for Comprehensive Sexual Education (CSE)/Family Life Education (FLE), is a notable result. RMI has initiated the in-school FLE in grade 4 (ages 9-10 years) in line with the international guidance on in-school CSE to start early. RMI is one of the first countries in the Pacific to initiate in-school FLE so early in the school. Participating Ministries better recognize the importance of FLE and of the overall youth SRHR – the enabling environment is a hard-won gain and will be leveraged in the next phase of UNPS Fund to accelerate achievement of results.

- FSM and RMI have invested in enhancing national capacities to maintain continuity in Sexual and Reproductive Health services at the onset of an emergency. Health Service Providers, Health Assistants (*the first responders to the outer islands who play an important role in maintaining continuity of SRH services in an emergency*) and the youth volunteers have been oriented. The trainings helped enhance the national capacities in the 2 countries to initiate Minimum Initial Services Package (MISP) for Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) and deliver lifesaving interventions during emergency as well as increasing awareness on different aspects of SRH among the peers and communities, dispel myths and support timely referrals across the continuum of development and humanitarian settings.
- RMI released a comprehensive National Youth Policy, including budget, implementation, and monitoring plan in March 2022. The policy's priority areas included an enhanced family support, increased access to education including FLE/CSE, opportunities for employment, access to health services including SRH and mental health, issues related to alcohol and drug abuse, youth participation, leadership, as well as climate change and humanitarian response. The policy document supports all young people to reach their full potential, and recognise the importance of engagement with families, communities, churches, Government, and CSOs.
- The National Adolescent and Youth Friendly Health Services (AYFHS) Guidelines were successfully aligned with international standards, ensuring inclusion of disability considerations, relevance to the local context, in all the three target countries (FSM, RMI and SOI). FSM has taken a lead in providing youth friendly services through orienting 26 master trainers who have further trained 57 service providers in the SDPs under the public health system across the four states, Pohnpei, Kosrae, Chuuk, Yap in the country to provide youth friendly services. The achievement is well beyond the original target for FSM i.e., training at least one service provider in the targeted secondary and tertiary SDPs.
- Forty selected Service Delivery Points (SDP)s in FSM, RMI and SOI have been re-equipped in 2021-22 to make them more youth friendly to support enhanced access to and utilisation of inclusive, resilient and quality basic services.
- For the in-school Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) / Family Life Education (FLE), FSM and RMI have adopted the approach to integrate FLE topics within existing curricula and subjects. The approach may be perceived to be more time-consuming - as the curriculum is revised by the national Ministries/Departments of Education - however there are clear advantages in terms of enhancing national capacities, building ownership and improving chances of sustaining FLE in schools after the external support is withdrawn.
- In-school Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE)/ Family Life Education (FLE) is a process intense initiative that includes several steps from advocacy to the roll-out of the programme and to reaching out to young people. In both FSM and RMI, the initiative resulted in FLE committees at the national level, sensitization of key decision makers in Education Departments, completion of content gap analyses and development of resource materials to orient teachers. By June 2023, teachers will be oriented in both the countries to transact FLE sessions in schools.
- Leveraging on the learnings from youth SRH work and to provide a continuum of information, skills, psychosocial support, health services and leadership opportunities to school-going adolescents, a model has been jointly developed by UNFPA and UNICEF (*captured in the **Annex II** of this report under UNFPA-outcome 4 report*) to leverage and maximize both agencies collective strengths and comparative advantages to put adolescents in the driver's seat and

enable them to realize their true potential. This will enable young people to contribute to and demand for accountability from systems and structures created to support their development and expand youth influence in policy making. Recognizing the relevance of influencing all the levels of a young person's ecosystem to bring about a sustainable change in their lives; the model proposes working with parents and key duty bearers and advocacy for youth-responsive policies, such as safe schools, anti-bullying, and return of teenage mothers to schools.

- In early childhood education (ECE), evidence-based plans, systems, curricula and teacher training for early childhood education were strengthened across the Pacific with UNICEF's support. As a result, access to ECE services has been expanded across the targeted island countries. For example, the Solomon Islands is developing a comprehensive national communication strategy to support the completed ECE integration in the National Education Action Plan. **Tuvalu's** drafted National ECE Policy is now awaiting parliamentary endorsement. And in **Fiji**, the National ECE Taskforce continued strengthening the national ECE governance mechanism by establishing the technical working group to inform the policy and curriculum design. While in **Tonga**, 46 new government ECE services have been opened nationwide following the UNICEF-supported training scale-up, resulting in 90% of all ECE teachers being trained.
- Birth registration continues to be supported across the target countries through the UNPS Fund Joint Programme. The Births, Marriages and Deaths (BMD) Act amendment has been finalized in Kiribati and is ready for its first parliamentary reading in 2023. The amendment ensures more births are registered by limiting the registration timeframe to one month (from one year) and accepting overseas certificates. In addition, since the roll-out of the electronic BR system in February 2022, birth registration data has been significantly enhanced, including the disaggregation of home births and hospital/clinic births by location. The Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (CRVS) Act amendment consultations were completed in three provinces of the **Solomon Islands**, including drafting instructions and reports through technical support provision and a submitted cabinet paper. The legislative revision enables the decentralization of birth registration services to the provinces, as the current law limits birth registration to only the central level.
- In addition, the proposed amendment will increase access to birth registration services at the provincial level. Following the Civil Registration and Identity Management (CRIM) Act 2021 and National Identity Card Act 2021 passed by parliament in 2021 in Vanuatu, a revised draft of the CRIM policy has been circulated for review to the partners while the National Identity Card Policy is also being drafted. Both policies have been and are still supported by the UNPS Fund Joint Programme. Unforeseen delays occurred in the processing and compilation of birth registration data due to a cyber-attack on the country's online government networks in 2022. The CRVS system has been strengthened in Samoa by training 32 BMD staff, enabling further use, and increasing registrations and data availability.
- Early Child Development (ECD): The final version of the national ECD policy is finalized in FSM, pending endorsement by the Cabinet in early 2023. Meanwhile, all four states (Pohnpei, Kosrae, Chuuk and Yap) are completing their state-level costed action plans for ECD. These policy tools were informed by nationwide consultations with over 600 people, with UNICEF partnering with four state-level partners. UNICEF is also strengthening the Presidential National Advisory Committee on Children (PNACC), which was reinstated in 2022 and tasked to coordinate across ministries and stakeholders to champion the ECD agenda in FSM.
- The National ECD coordination mechanism was established in Tuvalu, the National ECD Advisory Committee. The Committee, chaired by the Chief Executive Officer of the Minister of Education and Youth, spearheaded ongoing nationwide consultations with over 100 community members to inform the development of multi-sectoral ECD policy tools and led to mapping ECD services covering seven ECD service providers in Funafuti/Tuvalu.
- At the regional level, monitoring progress on the Pasifika Call to Action on ECD was supported by UNICEF with a comprehensive survey. The survey was developed in consultation with Pacific

countries to ensure the methodology is context-relevant and responsive to Pacific needs covering 15 Pacific Island Countries. Data analyses are complete and will contribute to the report disseminated during the 2023 Pacific ECD Forum.

- Development of a multi-sectoral expenditure tracking and budget analysis for ECD – as the Forum Economic Ministers (FEMM) priority - was supported in Kiribati, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu. The initiative increased understanding of the Government's investment in young children. The results of this ECD expenditure analysis were also incorporated in a paper, prepared in a joint effort of the UNPSF programme and other stakeholders such as PIFS and SPC, and disseminated to the 2022 FEMM in their meeting of August 2022 in Vanuatu. The analysis highlighted how appropriate and effective ECD systems are critical in delivering on children's rights, responding effectively to human capital shocks brought on by COVID-19 and other shocks, and contributing to long-term socio-economic development.
- As immunization rates have decreased during COVID-19, the UNPS Joint Programme has supported reversing the negative trends. For example, nearly 29,000 children in Fiji were immunized with the supplementary measles vaccination. While in RMI, the catch-up campaign resulted in 94% coverage for DPT3 and 95% coverage for measles-containing vaccines. In parallel with the immunization campaigns, UNICEF supported the vaccine logistics, planning, coordination, storage, monitoring and service delivery, including the instillation of cold chain equipment essential for storage in FSM and training 124 health workers from 56 health facilities in RMI.
- First 1,000 days: The UNPS Joint Programme has supported expanding access to high-impact nutrition interventions (HINI) across the targeted countries. The RMI HINI Framework and guidelines have been approved, including the five-year implementation framework. Similarly, the national HINI Framework and Guidelines have been developed in FSM. Further, the Nutrition Action Plan, which outlines the multi-sectoral actions, has been costed and is pending endorsement in Cabinet. UNICEF further supported disseminating and implementing the national HINI frameworks in Kiribati and Vanuatu. For example, in Kiribati, UNICEF trained nearly 500 health workers on implementing and monitoring multi-nutrient powders following the developed national guideline, promoting nutritious complementary food for children 6-23 months. While in Vanuatu, UNICEF disseminated the HINI Guidelines and distributed nutrition supplies in 42 Sanma and Penama Provinces health facilities, and further distribution is planned for Malampa Province.

OUTCOME 5: GOVERNANCE AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

By 2022, people and communities in the Pacific will contribute to and benefit from inclusive, informed, and transparent decision-making processes; accountable and responsive institutions; and improved access to justice.

UNDP-UN Pacific Regional Anti-Corruption Project (UNPRAC)

- All UNCAC reviews are completed (14 Pacific Island Countries and Territories (PICTs) have acceded to UNCAC, 6 PICTs completed the first and second review cycles and 7 PICTs completed the first review cycle). National Anti-Corruption Strategies (NACS) are established and implemented by PICTs (FSM adopted a NACS, Solomon Islands adopted a NACS and is reviewing it, Samoa has indicated interest in developing a NACS, Cook Islands is now drafting its new NACS) - it had been dormant for 5 years- Vanuatu has provided an AC mandate to the Ombudsman and the Public Prosecutor, Kiribati is reviewing its NACS; Fiji received policy advice and indicated commitment to prepare NACS.). Achievement of these outcomes resulted in **shattering of the taboo that barred discussion of corruption** as one of the most significant achievements in promoting effective, transparent, and accountable governments and enabling environment. The topic is now out in the open and the fight against it has been elevated as a regional commitment through the Teieniwa Vision. Corruption is now considered as a topic that is more openly discussed and grassroots monitoring/investigative journalism has started to show

positive results, demonstrate the beginning of a cultural shift. All the countries in the region have exhibited some degree of political will to address corruption.

- International and regional knowledge exchange on anti-corruption promoted by ensuring coordinated regional approach to addressing corruption – as one of the key rationales behind the Teieniwa Vision. The Priority Implementation Matrix for the Teieniwa Vision was presented for the Members’ consideration during the last Forum Official Committee Sub-Committee on regional security (FSRS) meeting which took place in November 2022, in a hybrid format which resulted in corruption being an item on the agenda of FSRS and it being a focus of PIF Member States.
- A range of new learning opportunities and peer-to-peer exchanges on public sector excellence emerged as an outcome of the Australian Public Sector Anti-Corruption Conference (APSACC) of November 2022, with a commitment by the Pacific institutions to work together through a Pacific community of practice on anti-corruption initiatives. The integrity attendees (from Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu) were individually able to report at the Pacific event supported by UN-PRAC on their current national integrity activities. The APSSAC provides technical knowledge as well as networking opportunities for Pacific integrity practitioners.
- A set of knowledge products developed (the list is available *in the full report – Outcome 5: Governance – Annex II*) have informed the capacity-building and advocacy work in the Pacific and drastically contributed to achieving the relevant outcome.
- Based on article 8 of UNCAC, there has been an increasing recognition by the Public Service Offices in the region of the need to develop comprehensive systems to help ensure that the public sector abides by good governance principles including transparency, accountability, openness, effectiveness, and efficiency. Two main initiatives were piloted in the Pacific including an integrity and ethics methodology (framework) validated in cooperation with Fiji Independent Commission Against Corruption (FICAC) and in partnership with the New Zealand’s Fale - in the context of Fale’s public service programme driven by capacity-building and knowledge-requests of the Pacific Public Service Commissions (PPSCs) to serve as a framework that can be used and adapted by agencies and public institutions throughout the Pacific; and a national Engagement Survey conducted in Samoa which was completed by 2952 public sector workers (30% of the whole public sector) and which finding will be integrated into public service reforms and new practices in 2023.
- Increased uptake of the Right to Information regime in the region. Niue and Solomon Islands have initiated dialogue and consultation to develop RTI policy and legislation. Tonga Ombudsman has upgraded its online functions to enable the citizens to lodge complaints and Vanuatu Right to Information Unit has launched an online portal ([Find an authority - Raetblongsave](#)) to enable the public to make information requests
- Establishment of a strategic partnership with the Pacific Community (SPC) and the Pacific Data Hub Project in delivery of a series of Open Data, Data Analysis and dissemination for Good Governance Webinars as well as creating linkages between the RTI and open data and their values for improved transparency, integrity, and anti-corruption has maximised the coherence of efforts and contributed to regional effectiveness and coordination.
- Expansion of nation-wide public integrity and anti-bribery campaign in Fiji across various sectors and stakeholders, including at municipal levels resulted in enhanced promoting public sector integrity and people effectiveness. After initially targeting the public sector, the campaign was expanded to private sector, civil society, local governments, and youth. It has been recognised to have had a positive impact, changing cultural norms and empowering employees (*disaggregated data are available in the full report – Outcome 5: Governance - attached as Annex II*).
- The second Pacific Youth Summit – “Stepping up for Corruption-Resilient 2050 Blue Pacific” - took place in October 2022 - with high level attendance of political leaders, three major CROP

agencies for the first time (USP, PIFS and SPC), expert specialists, students, young professionals and media representatives from 12 Pacific Island Countries (Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Niue, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu). This UNDP supported unprecedented anti-corruption youth movement aims at inspiring further demand and enabling increasingly informed and determined anti-corruption engagement. It also further strengthen the youth integrity movement in the Pacific and reinforcing the message that the young people of the region are committed to invest in a corruption-free, environmentally, and economically sustainable future for themselves and others. One of the major outcomes of the Summit was the adoption of the Pacific Youth Vision on a Corruption-resilient 2050 Blue Pacific. The Vision demonstrates clear demand from Pacific youth for a structured dialogue on good governance and anti-corruption, and further anchors youth ambitions in key regional strategic documents, including the Teieniwa Vision and the 2050 Pacific Strategy.

- Youth and women’s business integrity work was scaled up in Samoa and Niue in cooperation with the Chambers of Commerce, which resulted in development and launch of the Anti-corruption Women’s toolkit was launch - in both Samoan and English languages. This builds up on earlier similar work in Fiji and Palau.
- As the result of UNPRAC intervention, the Pacific Anti-Corruption Journalists Network (PACJN) awarded five media anti-corruption grants to individual Pacific journalists, including freelancers to investigate and publish high quality, unbiased and investigative stories that probe corruption issues, boost integrity, have public interest value and potential for societal impact. The five stories are due to be published in April-May 2023. It also resulted in provision of further funding by the PACJN for equipment to assist media associations to better undertake integrity trainings with regional peer engagement.
- The partnership with the Pacific Centre for Sport and Sustainable Development (PCSSD) of the University of the South Pacific (USP) resulted in enhancement of PCSSD operations to support a research project in developing a stronger understanding of the corruption related crime affecting sport in the Pacific. The project has contracted staff and researchers and monitors the PCSSD’s operations within two major PICTs covering international representative regional/national bodies, local sports associations and village-level sports bodies, along with two smaller PICTs. Preparations were also undertaken for the official launch of the partnership at the Oceania Sport and SDGs’ Strategic Partners Forum, at the Oceania National Olympic Committees (ONOC) General Assembly, on 19 April 2023 in Brisbane, with MFAT participation.
- Kiribati Public Service Office (PSO) was supported in building integrity awareness and youth advocacy on anti-corruption. The initiative contributed to the implementation of Kiribati’s Strategic Vison plan, Kiribati 20-year Vision (KV20), specifically its pillar 4 on governance - *Citizen satisfaction is at the heart of policy making and service delivery*. The immediate result indicates that KV20 seeking to reduce the number of complaints by 40% in 2023 sand 75% by 2036.
- The Pacific Anti-Corruption Journalist Network (PACJN) has supported and collaborated with various Pacific Media Association with immediate result of production of 89 substantial Pacific corruption-related stories by the PACJN journalists. Further update of UNODC/PACJN Anti-Corruption Story database, which is set up to collate all anti-corruption and integrity related issues covered in the media in the Pacific and the results will be captured in the next reporting cycle.
- Many more initiatives have also been taken throughout the year 2022 under each outcome by PUNOS that is captured in **Annex II** of this consolidated report. Results and achievements of the current year at outcome level will be reported in 2023.

UNFPA - UNICEF – Data – Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys (MICS)/Census

- Regional approach to data collection resulted in creation of synergies and economies of scale, strengthened user-producer dialogue, and promoted international standards, methodologies,

and use of technology. The regional approach to data collection allowed UNFPA and SPC to reach more countries with a wider range of tools than would have been possible if each country had been approached separately.

- UNFPA-SPC collaboration on Computer Assisted Personal Interviews (CAPI) and geo-referenced technology is a game changer that resulted in enabling census data collection during the pandemic. It allowed for transfer of knowledge to countries, including capacity building, the adaptation of tools to each country's context, and decreased the time gap between data collection and availability. The tools enabled remote quality control and timely feedback to the Statistical Offices and their field staff.
- There was an increased emphasis on ensuring a broader participatory approach throughout the entire data collection process for both census and MICS activities, which was recognised and encouraged. As a result, the stakeholders better understood the complexities of the data collection process including the challenges that the NSOs face such as funding and the sampling limitations, and how they, the stakeholders, can better support the process. The importance of initiative is in addressing the lack of attention and promotion of the idea of data as a public good by the Statistical Offices and even other development agencies. This is while the importance of the user including that the users' participation ultimately determines how the results will be received and the extent that the results will be used for policy development and decision making.
- A final clean census dataset is available for 5 countries including Kiribati, RMI, Tonga, Vanuatu and Samoa. Monographs on youth, gender and disability for Vanuatu and Fiji are under progress from the census data sets and should be available by end June 2023. A demographic atlas is available for Kiribati and will be available for Vanuatu by June 2023.
- Data from Census and MICS/DHS which have been used in the preparation of Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) on SDG progress, allowed UNFPA to position and prioritise SRH and GBV on national agendas. It was also very useful in the update of the United Nations Common Country Assessments (CCA) in 2022. This demographic intelligence provided the premise for prioritisation of support to health including SRH and GBV and youth concerns, among all other development priorities, during the next UN cycle 2023 – 2027 and included the prioritisation of Demographic Dividend within the UNSDCF. Population data and indicators from MICS-DHS have also served as input into other products such as scenario setting during the COVID and when developing investment cases for SRH and GBV. Capacities gained with this initiative can be used not only for similar future activities such as repeat rounds of the MICS and other censuses, but are transferrable to other data collection activities including, with some adaptations, the collection of administrative data.
- The joint programme of collaboration (of UNFPA-UNICEF and SPC) on MICS has added value on Sexual Reproductive Health (SRH) & Reproductive Rights and Violence Against Women (VAW) data. Analytical reports on SRH and domestic violence are progressing in the four countries (Kiribati, Samoa, Tonga and Tuvalu) from the MICS data.
- MICS results were also launched in Fiji, provided reliable national data across various thematic areas on the situation of children and women and supported in filling the data gaps for up to 25 Pacific Sustainable Development Indicators (SDI) and 33 SDG indicators. The results were also published with a user-friendly interactive online dashboard on survey indicators that enabled easy access by those in governments, academia, civil societies and development partners to new evidence for programmes, policy planning, monitoring and reporting.
- Conducting MICS Plus in Samoa was supported through longitudinal, representative household surveys with interviews frequently with near real-time reporting which resulted in enhancing the wellbeing of children and women and families. The results for the first wave on the impact of COVID-19 on the well-being of children, women and families were completed and disseminated.

- South-South cooperation was supported which resulted in enhancing the capacities of Pacific National Statistics Offices (NSOs) in data collection, analysis and use by organising a Pacific regional MICS workshop and facilitated sharing experiences among NSOs with commitment for further peer support in the future.

BEST PRACTICES, CHALLENGES, LESSONS LEARNED

BEST PRACTICES

Outcome 4: Equitable Basic Services

- Enhanced partnerships with Ministries including the Ministry of Health, Education, Youth, Women and Culture have facilitated prioritisation of youth SRH and increased level of commitment of the Government Departments and Ministries to leverage their collective strengths to better serve the interests of young people in diverse settings.
- Enhanced synergies across programmes and stakeholders as the result of investments in nurturing diverse partnership.
- Improved enabling environment for SRH as the result of increased focus on evidence-based advocacy, youth policy in RMI, national FLE committees and providing CSE/FLE to young people in schools and communities.
- Prioritised attention and gained traction to a systems approach to ECE, as the result of process of the ECE subsector analysis and plan development, with the recognition of ECE as a comprehensive subsector by the countries in the region that have undergone the sub-sector analysis.

Outcome 5: Governance and Community Engagement

- Collaboration with the University of South Pacific Student's Association (USPSA), and the adoption of the Pacific Youth Vision for Corruption-Resilient Blue Pacific that anchors on regional policy documents (*'Teieniwa Vision' and 2050 Blue Pacific Strategy*)
- Enhanced and active cooperation and dialogue with the CROP agencies in a more structured and sustainable fashion.
- Enhanced engagement with the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS) and the Teieniwa Vision that is a clear way in which the Pacific roadmap on addressing corruption - in line with United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC), Agenda 2030 and the SDGs - gains regional momentum.
- The Pacific Anti-Corruption Journalists Network (PACJN) has become a key network that is leading to hundreds of corruption related stories across the region being published each year.

CHALLENGES

Outcome 2: Gender Equality

- Natural disasters and political situations and the prolonged effects of COVID-19 has hindered the progress of project implementation by both UNWOMEN and UNDP. Many of the planned activities and events were either delayed or put on hold due to these unfavourable situations.

Outcome 4: Equitable Basic Services

- Limited trained human resources at both national and state levels within the Government interferes with programme delivery and leads to over dependence on international expertise that may not always add value in institution strengthening and is harder to access during crises such as COVID-19. At the same time, aid absorption capacity and shortage of designated, appropriately qualified human resources (*example of the ECE sub-sector*) in some countries limited the capacities at the implementation and monitoring level.

- International border closures across the region continued to prevent consultants from travelling to programme countries in person and the consecutive shift to virtual support.
- COVID-19 restrictions limited training, supervision and monitoring in general (*example of birth registration services, while Civil Registry (CR) offices were closed to the public during lockdowns*).
- Myths and stigma around SRH issues prevent access to services especially for women and young adults.
- Deeply entrenched social norms that condone gender-based violence in communities lead to difficulty in reporting and accessing redressal.
- In RMI and many other PICTs, the remoteness from neighbouring islands makes it difficult to provide and access health, education and social protection services.
- COVID-19 led to curtailed SRH budgets and re-purposing of the health workforce to contribute to the pandemic response in terms of creating awareness around COVID-related appropriate behaviours, improving immunisation and managing the active cases.
- COVID-19 led to school closures and deployment of education workforce to community awareness campaigns thereby initiatives such as FLE were not prioritised. However, while largely disruptive, the COVID-19 pandemic accelerated the use of online learning and interactions and urged programmes to work together more effectively with stronger collaboration and coordination
- In-school Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) / Family Life Education (FLE) led by the national Ministries of Education is a process-intense initiative with multiple and sequential milestones that take approximately 2 academic cycles before the teachers can start taking sessions with young people in classrooms. The above challenge is compounded by the fact that CSE/FLE is not universally accepted as a positive educational input to enhance health and well-being of young people and is de-prioritized over scholastic subjects. Hence, continued advocacy with the relevant stakeholders including Education Ministries, school administration and parents is crucial at all stages of the programme.

Outcome 5: Governance and Community Engagement

- Geopolitical crisis in the Pacific Region - as the result of the China and Solomon Islands Security Agreement (*highlighted that lack of transparency, accountability, restriction on media, restriction on right to information can have a direct impact on stability*).
- A number of (alleged) high-level corruption cases (*registered in the Pacific region - that have been impacting or imposed risk to the political discourse of a number of countries, such as Tonga and Cooks*).
- The above challenges underscore lack of trust between institutions and with the population infects other institutions with corrupt behaviour undermining prospects for peace, stability, and growth.
- Data is a key issue in understanding and measuring the challenge of corruption.

Outcome 5: Data – MICS/Census

- The COVID-19 pandemic continued to affect delivery of in-country technical support to countries during 2022 due to travel restrictions and gradual, very measured, return to a "new normal". This may have impacted quality of results where independent on-the ground quality control by technical agencies is important. Countries continued to post-poner their census as they tried to "catch-up" with other outstanding data collection activities, for example, FSM postponed its census and Vanuatu its MICS to 2023. Communication with counterparts remained a challenge and several logistical challenges were experienced as supply chains were disrupted, particularly with procurement of tablets for data collection.

- Limited involvement of national stakeholders in the data collection process has created a lack of demand for data and sub-optimal use of existing and emerging data. As data is not actively promoted as a public good, access to the emerging census datasets remains a challenge.
- Frequent changes among key national stakeholders require repetitive efforts at advocacy and capacity building. Continuity of program implementation poses a major problem in Vanuatu, where political changes impact the availability of champions and technical staff.

LESSONS LEARNED

Outcome 2: Gender Equality

- Importance of MVAs functioning as organised groups that can engage as part of broader coalitions to represent the interests of market vendors and work with partners to coordinate and implement necessary actions.
- Critical need for microinsurance literacy and access to microinsurance products; value adding for increased income through sales; business skills development; and support for market diversification.
- Need for digital literacy and digital skills, linking market vendors and their products across markets and supporting access to mobile and online marketing opportunities, which requires training on digital platforms. Training, mentoring, and coaching of WMVs is crucial to keep up with the changing times, particularly given low numeracy and literacy levels among WMVs. Guidance and practical exercises are needed.

Outcome 4: Equitable Basic Services

- Importance of evidence-based advocacy with a range of stakeholders to be a modus operandi in the Pacific especially on the sensitive and culturally entrenched issues of SRH and reproductive rights, rather than a damage containment approach. Advocacy is also required to integrate youth SRH issues in the national development plans to ensure continuity of support in case of changes in the programme leadership.
- In some of the PICTs such as FSM, states are autonomous. Especially in these countries contextualized advocacy is needed with the sub-national governance structures to prioritize youth SRH.
- Strategically importance of engaging at both senior and functional levels of governance at the planning stage and throughout the year to track progress and address constraints in a timely manner.
- Importance of prioritising joint planning and implementation by relevant stakeholders to optimise the use of scarce resources.
- Importance of investing in multi-sectoral partnerships, clarifying roles of different partners and leveraging strengths of diverse partners for increased synergies to yield rich dividends in terms of meeting project goals and ensure their sustainability.
- Supplement Human Resources in the Government especially during the early stages of project cycle – to optimize limited capacities in the Government departments. Additionally, identify and nurture the capacities of champions from and within the system.
- Develop a well-defined exit strategy– *with clearly defined roles, increasing responsibilities for Government counterparts over a period of time and/or support for new positions to carry out new functions* – to ensure that the project achievements are embedded within the structure of national institutions and will be sustained by the national Govts beyond the life of an externally funded initiative.
- It is important to build the focus on achieving results and invest in increasing capacities in programme management for improved results. This emerged as a clear learning from the

discussions held by the PSRO team along with the national teams in FSM and RMI in November 2022.

- Consistent support and guidance to the countries to harmonize their monitoring and evaluation frameworks and facilitate timely data collection, reporting through regular platforms, analysis and dissemination of results. Inefficient data management leads to gaps in the availability of actionable information in a timely manner and consequently impacts programme implementation and achievements.
- Need for creating national and sub-national knowledge and experience sharing platforms at an optimal frequency.
- Critical need for enhanced youth leadership and engagement to deal with the SRH concerns from their perspective. Youth participation structures such as the youth clubs can provide important avenues to young people to plan and lead activities that serve their interest, leveraging social media, radio, television etc.
- Leveraging existing Government initiatives to meet the complementary goals of national Governments, UNPSF and UNFPA could prove to be a very useful strategy. *(for example, in RMI, the increased buy-in from the Government, particularly the Ministries of Health & Human Services (MOHHS), Education and Culture & Internal Affairs on improving youth SRH and well-being provides an excellent opportunity to leverage existing Government initiatives to reach out to the more vulnerable populations. For example, youth SRH services can be integrated in the Neighbouring (Outer) Islands Enhanced Service Delivery Contracts between local Governments in the outer islands and MoHHS to ensure delivery & access to key SRH services to young people. This approach will go a long way in building sustainability as this is a high priority Government initiative aimed at improving health services in remote locations).*
- Importance of building upon opportunities to institutionalize the results and achievements of joint programmes and initiatives in the national Governance mechanisms.
- Importance of sensitising duty bearers, community, parents, provision of psychosocial support and easy access to services to create a positive environment for discussions and delivery of SRH information and services.
- Importance of documentation and further investments in scaling up the initiatives and approaches that have proven best results.
- Need for further investment in enhancing infrastructure and capacities for technology-based solutions, as per increased demands by PICTs due to efficiency of virtual forums, to ensure enhancing efficiencies in post COVID contexts. The approach also drastically supports reaching the remote islands and provides confidential and high-quality psycho-social support to young people through options such as the helplines.
- Importance of enhancing exchange platforms with participation of different stakeholders including Government departments, CSOs, academia, regional partners across the Pacific, or separately for the countries in each region. *(for example for the Micronesian countries).*
- Need for leveraging the enabling environment and existing partnerships, created during the first phase of UNPs Fund by focusing on aligning protocols, guidelines, resource materials related to AYSRH services and CSE/FLE to global standards while retaining their relevance in the Pacific context.
- Importance of integrating the COVID-19 response into routine health services to ensure that the services are not continued to be affected by the pandemic. As many PICTs experienced community transmission for the first time in 2022, this affected movement within the country due to lockdowns, which affected routine immunisation coverage and provision of routine health services and regular programming.
- Improving the co-ordination and joint programming across initiatives with similar objectives, is one of the UNPSF objectives. While improvements are notable and more visible within the country across different Government departments and Ministries, there is far greater potential

for inter-country and regional co-ordination for exchange of good practices and lessons learned to be able to realise the larger goals of this initiative.

Outcome 5: Governance and Community Engagement

- Need for measuring corruption, though difficult! It is now the right time to move to evidence-based assessments of the effectiveness of the control measures. It was not done before because the anti-corruption work in the Pacific started with focusing on the question ‘why’, and slowly moved to “how” and further consolidation of the anti-corruption work. The expectations needed to be managed, indeed through conducting a corruption survey and dissemination of the findings, the public builds expectations of actions from their institutions, but the government and their institutions in the Pacific were not in a position to respond to those expectations and this could have led to misunderstandings or, in worse case scenarios, unrest.
- Need for considering anti-corruption measures as sensitive “political” issues with limited hard data. Corruption is clearly a very political topic; senior government representatives solely assume where corruption lies, and which sectors are most affected by corruption often without hard data. It is well known that data based on detected cases of corruption suffers considerable underreporting and may show a biased view of actual corruption as they tend to reflect the intensity of activities by criminal justice and anticorruption bodies more than the actual extent of corruption. These considerations need to be constantly and carefully managed in implementation of the activities and measuring/assessing the results.
- Importance of addressing the corruption risks and mitigating its consequences. In the long term, improvements in peace and development are ultimately dependent on addressing the corruption risks and mitigating its consequences. Efforts aimed at tackling corruption are critically important for building sustainable peace and resilience. This places at the centre stage the fight against corruption that has been recognised by the Teieniwa Vision.
- The need for adopting a holistic - whole-of-society – approach in working with governments (*including parliamentarians, private sector, civil society, the media and youth*) to more efficiently and effectively tackle anti-corruption related challenges.

Outcome 5: Data-MICS/Census

- The institutionalisation of the regional data collection plan through the Strategic Framework for Pacific Statistics 2022-2030 will streamline and harmonise the processes across the different countries in the Pacific and make them more efficient. UNFPA will continue to collaborate with SPC and UNICEF to enhance user-producer dialogue, roll out CAPI and geo-referenced technology and to support the knowledge transfer and sharing of lessons learnt.
- The need to encourage for early regional level Census planning and preparations. Late planning makes it more challenging to support several countries at the same time particularly since most countries operate with sub-optimal levels of both human and financial resources. It was already a challenge to engage countries early enough in the data collection process particularly under the pandemic circumstances.
- The importance of capacity building as an essential element in building ownership to enable the stakeholders to advocate for improved data quality and advance the technical work, which requires allocation of adequate time. The initiative also helps countries to benefit from more practical regional activities and bring them together to progress the work and share experiences.
- The need for in-country support mechanisms including high level support to ensure availability of resources.
- The need for more emphasis on visibility of the results of initiatives such as the dissemination workshops and advocacy videos across the board.

SUSTAINABILITY OF THE PROGRAMME

The following initiatives under each outcome has taken/will be taken to ensure sustainability of UN interventions beyond the programmes/projects' lifetime.

Outcome 2: Gender Equality

- The sustainability plan for the market vendors associations is in place under Phase II of the project by focusing at greater and more meaningful government engagement. Through a developed sustainability mechanism to ensure that the market vendors are able to sustain the associations. It will also ensure that the trainings and capacity development initiatives will position them to uphold good governance, accountability and transparency.

Outcome 4: Equitable Basic Services

- UNFPA's priority is to serve the member states. The organisation's strategic approach is to work in partnership with the national/sub-national Governments, focus on institution strengthening, set up demonstration projects within the system and invest in capacity building initiatives to enable Government counterparts to meet international standards, as relevant. Sustaining positive change in the lives of people it serves is at the core of all UNFPA supported initiatives.
- In UNPSF supported initiatives, technical partners, such as Family Planning New South Wales have been deployed to enable national Governments to meet international standards. Efforts are also being made to identify and nurture talent from within the region rather than investing in international expertise only. In-service training and mentorship mechanisms are being established to support Government institutions and systems.
- UNFPA also fosters in-country partnerships with Civil Society, communities, and key target audience (*for example, the young people for CSE/FLE, youth friendly guidelines and services*) so that initiatives are contextualised, remain relevant to Pacific Island countries and are owned by the Government.
- The above-mentioned efforts should enhance political will, Government ownership and sustain the gains consolidated during project life.
- UNFPA will work with national Governments to pitch for funding to continue the important work on SRHR of young people in Micronesia.
- Early Childhood Education (ECE): The established partnership supports ministries' visions to fully integrate the ECE subsector within education sector planning processes, ensuring well-resourced ECE subsectors in the target countries, supporting the long-term sustainability of ECE programmes and ensuring dedicated budgets. In the process of developing ECE subsector plans, countries are identifying priorities and strategies addressing five core functions that need to be developed specifically for ECE. Evidence-based decision-making to ensure equitable access to and participation in quality programmes, especially for young children with a disability or in vulnerable circumstances, underpins the specified core functions.
- Birth Registration: In Kiribati and the Solomon Islands, priorities include passing the CRVS Act amendment bills in parliament and continued training, setup and a full roll-out of the new CR online system. In Samoa and Vanuatu, the implementation of key recommendations in BR processes with UNESCAP and UNDP will be prioritised.

Outcome 5: Governance and Community Engagement

- Established strategic partnerships (*with anti-corruption and integrity institutions, CROP agencies, academia, youth organisations, media, private sector*), mechanisms, tools and translating knowledge in policy, advisory and analytical products.
- Established coordinated regional approach in addressing corruption - *as a crucial element of corruption to be rooted into a regional body* - "outlives projects" and "owned and driven" by the Pacific. The approach ensured sustainable and coordinated leading of anti-corruption -

noting high turn-over of personnel both on the counterpart and technical assistance side -rather than associated with specific individuals.

- The institutional, policy, advisory as well as the work with the non-state actors is firmly anchored on the international and regional commitments including UNCAC, Agenda 2030/SDGs, the Teieniwa Vision, Boe Declaration for Regional Security, 2050 Blue Pacific Strategy. The specific project-support efforts are also reflected in the Teieniwa Action plan which is the roadmap for implementation of the regional anti-corruption commitments.
- The work with PIFS through USPSA, and the adoption of the Pacific Youth Vision for Corruption-Resilient Blue Pacific will be taken forward by USPSA and the Pacific Youth Summit with USPSA aiming for it to become an annual event to provide a platform for governance and anti-corruption dialogue.
- The integrity and ethics methodology developed in cooperation with the Public Service Fale to be sustained through the Fale.
- The knowledge relating to private sector work will also be sustained through the knowledge-toolkits related to women and youth and channelling the work through Chamber of Commerce.
- PACJN continuing to serve the Pacific through evidence-based, factual information and continuing to write about corruption for Pacific Islanders to be well-informed and understand especially what public funds are being spent on.

Outcome 5: Data-MICS/Census

- Established strong partnership and working relationship with SPC has helped SPC to strengthen its support to the countries and, ensure institutionalisation of the Census and MICS efforts through the regional data collection plan of the Strategic Framework for Pacific Statistics 2022-2030 as this would streamline and harmonise the processes across the different countries in the Pacific and make them more efficient. Continuous collaboration of UNFPA with SPC and UNICEF will enhance user-producer dialogue which will create both demand and supply for high quality and timely data, encourage the use of the data in decision making and policy development, and support the knowledge transfer and sharing of lessons learnt.

ANNEXES

Annex I: *Financial Report*

Annex II: *2022 Annual Reports of PUNOs (five reports)*



Annual Report 2022

Outcome 2- Gender Equality

UNDP and UN Women deliver Markets 4 Change (M4C) promotes gender equality through the economic empowerment of women market vendors. It brings together governments, market vendors and market vendor associations (MVAs), civil society organizations and UN agencies.

Achieved Results

M4C Outcome 1: Inclusive, effective and representative marketplace groups are created and grow, further enabled and recognised

- The women market vendors were provided with training opportunities towards enhancing their economic livelihoods whereby in partnership with the Suva City Council, the M4C Fiji Team conducted a three-day food safety training for 50 Vunisea market vendors (44 female, 6 male). The training covered topics on food handling practices and improving quality in accordance with the Department of Health's Food Safety measures, guidelines, and regulations.
- Enhancing a more conducive and inclusive environment for women market vendors to voice and plan together with the duty bearers of the municipal market saw the participation of the Vueti Kadavu Market Vendors Association President and the Vunisea market manager in the two Project Working Committee governance meeting for 2022 has improved their working relationship to address some of the challenges for the market vendors in Kadavu to better understand the market By-laws and the Market Vendors Association constitution. The network that has been established through the bi-annual governance meetings has availed a solution-oriented platform for the market vendors associations and market managers to share their achievements and practical solutions to addressing their challenges.
- Women market vendors for the first time convened a governance meeting with the government, key stakeholders and donors which provided them with the opportunity to discuss and provide their input in matters pertaining to the operations and management of the markets which included social, economic and political spheres on the 18th of October, whereby Samoa hosted its first inaugural Project Management Committee (PMC) meeting. The PMC will work towards ensuring that adequate support is provided to the market vendors in achieving the objectives of M4C. The PMC was attended by the Accident Compensation Corporation (ACC), Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries (MAF), Samoa Land Corporation (SLC), the Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development (MWCSO) and the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFAT) of Australia and UNDP.
- Women market vendors in Samoa will be provided with an avenue to build their leadership skills and practice voice and agency together with enhancing their

knowledge on their rights by attending a planned ‘Getting Started Workshop’ in Samoa are scheduled to commence in March of 2023. The Getting Started Workshop is designed to strengthen the capacity of market vendors through the establishment of market vendor associations for the 3 project sites. The Getting Started workshop in Samoa will be facilitated in partnership with the Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development and the Ministry of Industry and Labor.

M4C Outcome 2: Improved socio-economic security for women market vendors.

- Women market vendors from the maritime areas were part of the partnership with **ANZ Bank, conducted a Money Minded Financial Literacy training in Vunisea, Kadavu** (89 women, 25 youth, 65 men). The training ensured the rural women market vendors increased business and financial skills, such as starting and maintaining savings, setting personal and family goals, and vision boards, importance of recording-keeping, assertiveness and saying no to unnecessary spending.
- In partnership with UNCDF, an online digital literacy training was conducted and attended by 10 women and 4 male market vendors from Vunisea Kadavu. The training ensured the market vendors were able to develop digital literacy, using online platforms to strengthen their business, like marketing their produce or strengthening and maintaining their network via social media platforms.
- Inclusive financial and social services providers were in Vunisea, Kadavu which saw 10 financial and social services institutions providing a conducive environment for the women market vendor’s to access information and services. The market business fair ensured 45 rural women, 52 men, and 34 youths accessed gender – inclusive financial and social services.
- In July, 300 market vendor farmers were supported with tools, seeds, wheelbarrows, raincoats, and protective equipment’s as part of the TC Harold and Covid 19 recovery approach. The 300 farmers were selected based on the 145 recipients in 2020 and an additional 155 were selected as part of the financial literacy training recipients. An inclusive approach ensured the 300 farmers included couple, youth, people living with disability and the other minority groups.
- M4C Project staff participated in sub-committee meetings of financial institutions at the Reserve Bank of Fiji which ensured the discussion of including the services to maritime and rural areas were highlighted.
- In December, partnership with Ministry of Agriculture, a Value Addition training was conducted in Galoa Village, Navotu Village and Vunisea, Kadavu. The training ensured 75 rural women market vendors increased economic and sustainable livelihoods through improved climate change resilient agricultural practices, and value-adding techniques and gained knowledge on agricultural pest and disease, soil care and plant nutrients, with options to preserve salted meat, pawpaw pickle, vegetable pickle, tomato chutney, fruit jams.

Samoa

- Approximately 1400 market vendors (900 females & 500 males) benefitted directly from the distribution of Covid supplies (disposal facemasks, sanitizers, etc. to Fugalei and Salelologa Markets).

- Partnership with Ministry of Industry and Labor resulted in potential marketing and branding training opportunities for upskilling market vendors.

Outcome 3: Local governments, market management and other decision makers are gender-responsive, effective, and accountable to women market vendors.

- Improving the governance structures and mechanisms to benefit the women market vendors resulted in UN Women and the Suva City Council, in partnership, undertaking an assessment of the market's management structure in Kadavu and developed recommendations for improving market management governance, accountability, and transparency.
- On the 28th of October Samoa celebrated the International Day for Rural Women for the first time as part of Outcome 3. The event was attended by 355 members of rural women committees and 59 high level delegates including members of Cabinet, Representatives from Development Partners such as NZ, AUS, USA, China & Japan etc., CEOs/ACEOs from respective Government ministries, NGOs, and the private sector. This event garnered interest and support for recognizing the importance of women market vendors in local economic development.
- In October M4C Samoa hosted a site visit with the New Zealand Ambassador for Gender Equality-Pacific Ms. Louisa Wall at the Fugalei Market in Apia. This visit attracted Pacific region's political interest on the important role of women in the informal sector and the crucial role women market vendors play in the Pacific on food security and economic development.

Outcome 4: Physical market structures and operating systems are improved to make markets more gender-responsive, safer, more accessible and sustainable, resilient to disaster risks and climate change.

- Efforts to provide an enabling working environment for women market vendors in Vunisea, Kadavu continued whereby consultation meeting was held with 56 Vunisea market vendors association members (44 females, 12 male) to provide an update on the current workplan and the schedule of work for the market repairs and maintenance timeline. Consultation with the Suva City Council management to discuss the workplan, actions undertaken and timeline for the completion of the infrastructural support for Vunisea Market to continue in December and to be completed by April 2023.
- Similarly in Samoa, the M4C team conducted 2 site visits in collaboration with the Samoa Land Corporation (SLC), the Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development (MWCSO) and the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFAT) of Australia conducted a two (2) day mission in Savaii to site the Salelologa Market infrastructure needs. The Mission was attended by the First Secretary of DFAT Australia, Board Chairman and 3 ACEO's of SLC and a senior representative from the MWCSO. This multistakeholder approach was the first of its kind to include the Government of Samoa, development partners and the donors in the planning and development of infrastructure plans under the project. The second visit took place in October where the M4C Team conducted a site visit of the Savalalo Fish Market to identify needed

infrastructure support. It is worth noting that the Savalalo Fish Market does not have facilities and provisions for women and children's restrooms and ablution blocks.

- The M4C Samoa team is in the process of formalizing commitment with the Government of New Zealand and the Government of Samoa on the construction of the new Savalalo Flea Market. This has been identified as an opportunity to develop the first gender responsive designed facility in Samoa.
- The Project is now in the process of procuring security cameras and fire alarms for the three project sites to equip the market administrators with the proper tools to ensure that the physical facility discourages potential violence against women and is also disaster resilient.

PLANNED ACTIVITIES FOR REMAINDER OF 2023

Samoa

- Procurement of Security Cameras for Fugalei Market
- Procurement of Sanitation Chemicals for Fugalei, Salelologa and Savalalo Markets
- Consultation and meeting with the MWCSO on Project Document and expectations of implementation partners for M4C Samoa.

Kadavu

- Continuation of the Vunisea market repairs and improvement project by the Suva City Council.
- Continued support to the MVA on governance and management of the association

Challenges, Lessons Learned, Best Practices

Natural disasters and political situations and the prolonged effects of COVID has hindered the progress of project implementation by both UN Women and UNDP. Many of the planned activities and events were either delayed or put on hold due to these unfavorable situations. Despite the challenges mentioned the project was able to undertake some key implementation and used the opportunity to garner relationship with the Governments of Fiji and Samoa which resulted in undertaking a partnership approach which resulted in the governments taking ownership themselves and actively participating.

Sustainability of the Programme

Phase II of the project design is focused on greater and more meaningful government engagement. The sustainability plans for the market vendors associations is also a mechanism to ensure the market vendors are able to sustain the associations and with the trainings and capacity development initiatives in place will position them to uphold good governance, accountability and transparency.

UN Pacific Strategy Fund
Annual Progress Report
For the Period January - December 2022

UNFPA Contributions: Outcome 4: Equitable Basic Services



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

UNFPA contributes towards youth sexual and reproductive health (SRH) in FSM, RMI and Solomon Islands under the **Outcome 4** on equitable basic services. Overall, UNFPA is **on track** to achieve the committed results under Outcome 4 despite the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. **All the three countries have exceeded the target of 25% secondary and tertiary Service Delivery Points (SDPs) being able to provide quality-assured, adolescent-friendly, integrated sexual and reproductive health services.** This outcome indicator has been achieved through a range of strategic investments including, the advocacy with multiple stakeholders, development of resource materials that are aligned to the international standards and responsive to the Pacific realities, enhanced capacities (including mindset change) of a critical mass of service providers and most importantly, enhanced Government ownership for sustainability and adaptation to the country context. National capacities to initiate **Minimum Initial Services Package (MISP) to maintain continuity in SRH services in humanitarian situations has been strengthened** in FSM and RMI. **Both these countries have recorded good progress in terms of enabling the public education system to operationalize Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE)/ Family Life Education (FLE).** They have adopted the approach to integrate FLE topics within existing curricula and subjects that has much higher chances of being sustained. International guidance recommends initiating CSE at the age of 5 years. RMI is one of the few countries in the Pacific to initiate FLE in primary school, grade 4 (age 9/ 10 years). The UNPSF supported initiatives have successfully engaged with the nodal Ministries of Health and Education in FSM and RMI to identify champions from within the system and to enable them to appreciate the complementarity in their work to provide a continuum of education, support and services to young people. UNFPA's approach to work in partnership with the national and sub-national Governments, focus on institution strengthening, set up demonstration projects within the system and invest in capacity building initiatives to enable Government counterparts to meet quality standards has immensely contributed towards meeting project outcomes. UNFPA has fostered partnerships with technical organizations, such as Family Planning Australia, Civil Society, communities and key target audience (for example, the young people for CSE/FLE, youth friendly guidelines and services) so that initiatives are contextualized, remain relevant to Pacific Island countries and are owned by the Government. *Details in relevant sections below.*

INTRODUCTION

The year under review (2022) was significant for United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) – the UN reproductive health agency - as the concluding year of its 6th five-year Multi-Country Programme (MCP6) for 14 Pacific Island Countries and Territories (PICTs), implemented as part of the UN-wide Pacific Strategy (UNPS) 2018–2022. During the MCP6 cycle, UNFPA has received funding support from New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT) through the UNPS Fund, in assisting the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), the Republic of Marshall Islands (RMI) as well as Solomon Islands in improving youth sexual and reproductive health (SRH) under UNPSF Outcome 4 (equitable basic services). 2022 was another uniquely challenging year for many of Small Island Developing States (SIDSs) in the Pacific including FSM, RMI and Solomon Islands for effective and efficient programme delivery, due to the lingering COVID-19 pandemic and negative effects of climate change i.e. natural disasters; nonetheless, despite national/local resource constraints and aforementioned topographic and socio-economic challenges faced by these programme countries, UNFPA Pacific in 2022 was able to assist them in accomplishing notable results vis a vis annual targets set out under this Outcome, as demonstrated in the subsequent sections of this report.

THE SOCIO-CULTURAL, ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL CONTEXT

The 14 PICTs that UNFPA Pacific supports, including FSM, RMI, Solomon Islands in addition to Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, Palau, Samoa, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu, Cook Islands, Niue and Tokelau, are home to approximately 2.5 million people, with Fiji and Solomon Islands accounting for 63 per cent (around 1.6 million); the other countries and territories are much smaller, with populations ranging from 1,500 to 300,000 people. On average, 57 per cent of the combined population of these 14 PICTs are below the age of 25, and 40 per cent are below 18. The Pacific population is estimated to increase by 40 per cent by 2050; that growth is not only a result of mortality and fertility trends but also of migration patterns. The number of international migrants from PICTs has almost doubled over the last 25 years.¹

The megatrends affecting the Pacific region including in 2022 are: climate change, gender inequality, income disparity, rapid urbanization and population growth. Given the dependence of PICT economies on mobility and tourism, the COVID-19 impact has exacerbated inequalities and worsened poverty, severely testing the resilience and governance capacities of the PICTs, including their generally weak health service delivery capacities.

Universal access to sexual and reproductive health (SRH) is improving in the Pacific, as evidenced by increasing antenatal care rates (ranging from 76 per cent to 100 per cent) and skilled birth attendance (from 82 per cent to 100 per cent). However, recent analysis revealed concerning trends in the Pacific that some SRH indicators have remained relatively static for the past two decades: the unmet need for family planning among married women aged 15-49 years is 20 per cent or above in five of nine PICTs that have available data (Fiji, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Tuvalu), while adolescent birth rates are increasing in six PICTs.

¹ United Nations (2022). *United Nations Population Fund Multi Country Programme Document for Pacific Island countries and territories*, New York.

Contributing factors to the unmet need include limited access to contraceptives and a low demand for family planning services.

Domestic financing across all PICTs for SRH programmes is limited, particularly for commodity procurement and health infrastructure improvement. The Pacific scores the lowest among all the regions in the world on the universal health coverage index.

The PICTs have some of the highest rates of GBV in the world – two out of three women have experienced sexual or physical violence in their lifetime at the hands of their intimate partners, twice as much as the global average of one out of three. The ratification of relevant treaties, including the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, by the Pacific SIDS are among the lowest levels in the world. While the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women has been ratified by 10 of 14 countries, strong gender stereotyping and patriarchal attitudes tend to legitimize the discrimination against women and girls, resulting in their disadvantaged positions in education, employment, public and political life as well as in decision-making related to their sexual and reproductive health. This is accentuated by the multiple and intersectional marginalization of women and girls, including those with disabilities, due to identity, location and vulnerability. Under the “2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent”, the PICTs are committed to addressing social and gender norms as well as ensuring the availability of high-quality GBV data.

Some of the key SRH and GBV indicators in the PICTs are summarized below:

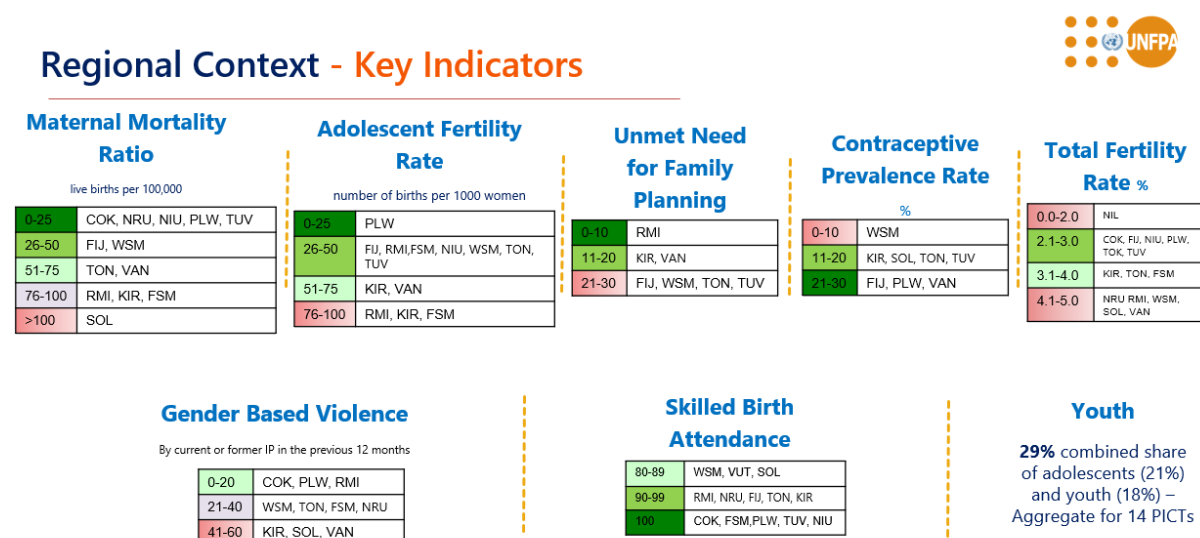


Figure 1: SHR Indicators in the Pacific

The PICTs in general have a high adolescent fertility and high prevalence of gender based violence, and FSM and RMI are no exceptions. In the context of a large proportion of the adolescent and youth among the population, these trends are worrisome and need to be reversed if these countries are to fully harness the demographic dividend. Hence, the UNPSF contributions towards improving youth SRH and rights are particularly valuable to FSM and RMI.

Both FSM and RMI have compacts of free association with the United States of America. FSM is a key arbitrator for all North Pacific countries to join the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF). Both

countries have included SRH in their national plans, such as the FSM Health Strategic Framework (2014-2024) and the RMI National Strategic Plan (2020-2030). RMI is working towards finalizing the Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn, Child and Adolescent Health (RMNCAH) policy with UNFPA support. RMI has the highest incidence rates of cervical cancer in the world (even increasing from 65.6/100,000 females in 2014 to 70 in 2020), and thus has prioritized cervical cancer prevention and management in their plans. Gender equality including through elimination of violence against women is an important priority for both FSM and RMI. FSM has a gender policy, Ending Violence Against Women (EVAW) policy and state action plans whereas RMI has in place a national gender mainstreaming policy and clinical standard operating procedures (SOPs) for sexual and gender-based violence. Universal Periodic Reviews were conducted in RMI (2020) and FSM (2021). RMI conducted a voluntary national review in 2021.



Figure 2: Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) and the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM)

Both FSM and RMI experienced a significant spike in COVID-19 cases in 2022. The situation was particularly worrisome in RMI. Within four weeks after the first community transmission was detected in the capital city of Majuro in August 2022, more than 15,000 COVID-19 confirmed cases with 17 deaths were reported to the World Health Organization (WHO). A state of emergency was declared. UNFPA Pacific received a request from the RMI Ministry of Health and Human Services, through WHO, to urgently assist RMI with its COVID-19 response by deploying a physician to the most populous island of the country, Ebeye. UNFPA consultant physician, Dr Marie Lanwi-Paul, who was at that moment working in Majuro, quickly travelled more than 400 kilometres to Ebeye to provide the necessary help (see [here](#) for more details of the assistance provided by UNFPA).



Figure 3: UNFPA's Dr Marie Lanwi-Paul supporting the COVID-19 response in Ebeye, RMI

ACHIEVEMENTS

The topic of SRHR in general, and particularly when it pertains to young people, is highly sensitive and oftentimes controversial, in many parts of the world including in the Pacific. The fact that the costs of not addressing SRHR especially for young people are high, is not always appreciated by influential stakeholders and gate-keepers, including unintended teenage pregnancy, Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs), irresponsible and violent behaviours, dropping out of high school, and several other negative consequences that limit the ability of young people, and especially girls, to realize their potential, which in turn inhibit the prospects for sustainable development of the whole community and country. In this context, an important achievement made during the year under reporting was **UNFPA's successful engagement with the Ministries and Departments of Health and Education, identifying champions from within the system and developing an understanding of the complementarity in their work to provide a continuum of education, support and services to young people and Government's ownership of the agenda of youth health and well-being.** Through regional and in-country partnerships, UNFPA has been able to adapt international standards to country context and invested in the in-country capacities to own and sustain the initiative.

Investments in **diverse partnerships** with the Government, civil society, regional technical organizations, community members and young people have yielded rich dividends. The political will and commitment at senior levels for CSE/FLE, generated as a result of the UNPS Fund supported activities, is notable, particularly in RMI. Participating Ministries better recognize the importance of FLE, and of the overall youth SRHR - this can be leveraged in the next phase to accelerate achievements. *More details in the section on best practices.*

UNPSF support to FSM and RMI has contributed towards the humanitarian and development nexus. Both countries have invested in **enhancing national capacities to initiate Minimum Initial Services Package (MISP) for Sexual and Reproductive Health** at the onset of an emergency. In FSM, 48, and in RMI, 23 service providers (including 17 Health Assistants)

were trained to deliver lifesaving interventions during emergencies. These Health Assistants are the first responders on the outer islands who play an important role in maintaining continuity of SRH services in an emergency. In addition, 14 youth volunteers in RMI have been oriented to Adolescent SRH in emergencies. The plan is to incrementally build the capacities of these youth volunteers on different aspects of SRH to help increase awareness among their peers and communities, dispel myths and support timely referrals in the continuum of development and humanitarian settings.

RMI released the **National Youth Policy in March 2022** [here](#), the development of which involved diverse stakeholders. The policy aims to support all young people to reach their full potential, and recognizes the importance of engagement with families, communities, churches, government, and CSOs to achieve this. The policy's priority areas include enhanced family support, increased access to education including FLE/CSE, opportunities for employment, access to health services including SRH and mental health, issues related to alcohol and drug abuse, youth participation, leadership, as well as climate change and humanitarian response. It is costed and has an implementation and monitoring plan up to 2025.

The relevant **National Adolescent and Youth Friendly Health Services (AYFHS) Guidelines** were successfully aligned with international standards, ensuring disability-inclusivity, relevant to the local context, **in all the three target countries ([FSM](#), [RMI](#) and [Solomon Islands](#))**. **FSM has taken a lead in providing youth friendly services through orienting 26 master trainers who have further trained 57 service providers in the SDPs under the public health system across the 4 states in the country to provide youth friendly services**. The achievement is well beyond the original target for FSM i.e. training at least one service provider in the targeted secondary and tertiary SDPs (n=5). RMI too had planned for this training, but it had to be postponed due to the surge in COVID-19 cases in August followed by a flu outbreak in November.

Forty selected SDPs in FSM, RMI and Solomon Islands have been re-equipped in 2021-22 to make them more youth friendly. In this phase of the programme, only the secondary and tertiary SDPs were targeted to make them youth friendly. There are 5 targeted SDPs in FSM, 2 in RMI and 11 in Solomons. **Although there are only 18 targeted SDPs, the programme has over-achieved by re-equipping 40 SDPs to make them more youth friendly.** The facilities that have internet connection have been provided with a desktop and a LCD screen. Other facilities have received additional notice board, bookcase, filing cabinet and 6 chairs. Additionally, youth friendly IEC materials including posters on different aspects of SRH for display in Service Delivery Points (SDPs) have been pre-tested in RMI and are pending final approval from the publications committee (see [IEC posters](#)). The job aids to support service providers to provide youth friendly services have been developed. The approval from the publications committee is pending. These will be made available for circulation by Q2/2023. It is expected that these additional equipment and IEC materials will further improve the ambience of SDPs and make them more conducive for youth friendly services.

FSM and RMI have made good progress on the in-school Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) / Family Life Education (FLE). Both countries have adopted the **approach to integrate FLE topics within existing curricula and subjects** (see training resources for in-school CSE/FLE in [FSM](#) and [RMI](#)). This approach is more time-consuming as the curriculum is revised by the national Ministries/Departments of Education, but has **clear advantages in terms of enhancing national capacities, building ownership and improving**

chances of sustaining FLE in schools after the external support is withdrawn (see [FSM](#) and [RMI](#) posters displayed at a Regional CSE Workshop that UNFPA organized on 2-4 December 2022 in Fiji).

RMI has initiated the in-school FLE in grade 4 (ages 9-10 years) as per the UNPSF goal, in line with the international guidance on in-school CSE to start early. **RMI is one of the first countries in the Pacific to initiate in-school FLE so early in the school.**



Figure 4: In-school CSE/FLE training in RMI

It may be noted that the in-school Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE)/ Family Life Education (FLE) is a process heavy initiative that includes several steps from advocacy until the roll out of the programme to reach out to young people, as indicated in the results table. With support from the regional partner, Family Planning New South Wales (FPNSW), Both the countries will be able to roll out the programme in schools in early 2023. RMI is ahead as it has already oriented the first batch of 10 teachers in December 2022 and the second batch will be oriented in Q1, 2023. Please find the link to teacher training resources [here](#).

The **out-of-school FLE (OOS FLE) work was not committed to in the agreed work plan but was identified as an important priority in FSM**. The work is led by the Department of Health and Social Affairs in close co-ordination with the CSOs, Micronesian Productions and Chuuk Women’s Council. Supported by FPNSW, the resource materials for OOSFLE have been adapted and are being finalized to the local context in consultation with the local CSOs and relevant Government officials.



Figure 5: Out-of-school CSE/FLE training in FSM

Overall, committed results are on track to be delivered by the end of the Phase 1 extension phase in June 2023, even though the COVID-19 pandemic greatly hindered the programme delivery which necessitated a considerable adaptation of the work plans.

UNFPA and United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) have decided to engage in a technical partnership in the near future to build and validate a more comprehensive model to provide a continuum of information, skills, psychosocial support, health services and leadership opportunities to school-going adolescents. This is another significant achievement of the UNPSF support to youth SRH in the North Pacific. The proposed model ***(outlined in Annexure 1)*** will provide an excellent opportunity to the two UN agencies to leverage and maximize their collective strengths and comparative advantages to put adolescents in the driver’s seat through engagement and leadership platforms that will enable them to realize their true potential. These platforms are expected to enable young people to contribute as well as demand accountability from systems and structures created to support their development and expand youth influence in policy making. Recognizing the relevance of influencing all the levels of a young person’s ecosystem to bring about a sustainable change in their lives; the model proposes to work with **parents and key duty bearers** and **advocacy for youth-responsive policies**, such as safe schools, anti-bullying, and return of teenage mothers to schools.

RESULTS

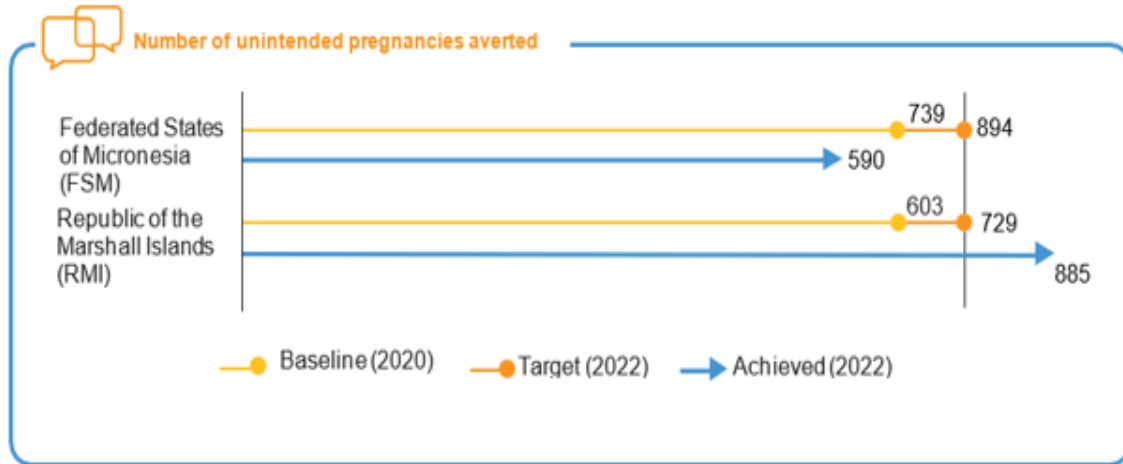
IMPLEMENTATION STATUS

The outcome and output level results as articulated in the Monitoring Evaluation Results and Learning (MERL) Framework, including the implementation status, are presented below. The MERL table is in ***Annexure 2***.

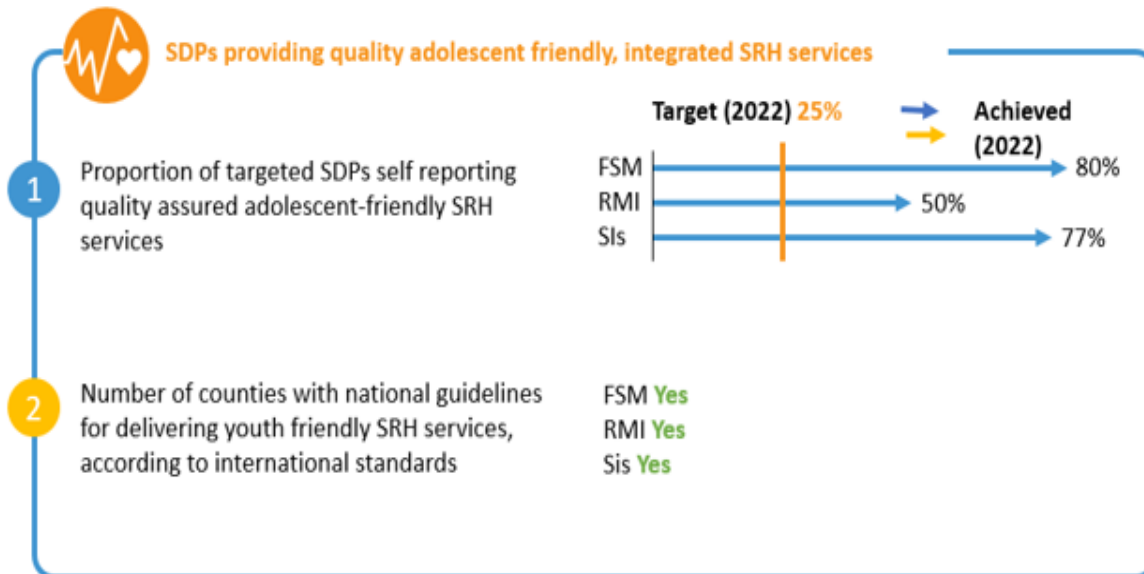


UNPSF Progress Towards Outcome 4 Results

UNPSF Outcome IV: Equitable Basic Services: By 2022, more people in the Pacific, particularly the most vulnerable, have increased equitable access to and utilization of inclusive, resilient and quality basic services

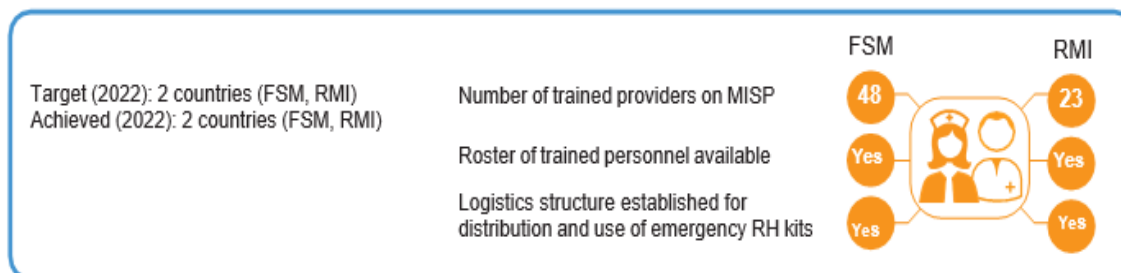


UNPSF Output I: Indicator I: Number of countries where 25% secondary and tertiary SDPs provide quality assured, adolescent friendly, integrated SRH services



UNPSF Output I: Indicator II:

Number of countries that have the capacity to implement MISP at the onset of crises



UNPSF Output II: Improved access to Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE)/Family Life Education (FLE) for in school youth with a special focus on very young adolescent girls

	On Target for 2022	Achieved in 2022	
		FSM	RMI
1 Country has designated team to support CSE/FLE national advocacy and integration	✓	✓	✓
2 Country has CSE/FLE content gap analyses completed	✓	✓	✓
3 Country has completed scoping and sequencing for CSE/FLE targeted syllabi	✓	✓	✓
4 Country has revised and validated the integrated CSE/FLE syllabi	✓	✓	✓
5 Training of teachers	✓	✗	✓

STORIES OF HUMAN INTEREST

Strengthening Adolescent Youth Friendly Sexual Reproductive Health (AYSRH) Services in FSM

One of the priorities for the FSM Government has been to strengthen the delivery of AYSRH services in the public health system. UNFPA with its regional technical Implementing Partner, Family Planning New South Wales (FPNSW), convened an AYSRH training for public health workers in Pohnpei from 26–29 September 2022. The training was attended by 32 public health workers including nurses, health assistants, and health educators.



Figure 6: AYSRH training in FSM

Through the training, a marked improvement was observed in the capacity and ownership of the service providers in providing AYSRH services. *“We have to build on existing services and also bring back relevant services used in the past for youth, so young people can have access to and are more comfortable and willing to access health services,”* said Joicelynn Peter, Family Planning Health Assistant.

The health service providers commended the training and considered it very timely as it boosted their confidence to better serve the youth community. *“Health-care services providers are more successful when people are more willing to listen to people who are youth-friendly,”* said Decent Rosario, Family Planning Health Educator.

The FSM Department of Health and Social Affairs (DHSA) has taken important steps towards enhancing the quality of SRH services for young people. With technical support from FPNSW and UNFPA, DHSA led the process of aligning the National Adolescent and Youth-Friendly Health Services Guidelines with international standards while retaining the relevance for the local context. Stakeholders from the public health system as well as civil society were engaged in this process. Furthermore, 26 master trainers and a total of 57 service providers across the 4 states have been oriented to provide youth friendly services.

The new guidance, enhanced capacities and improved ambience of Service Delivery Points through youth friendly IEC materials should make it easier for young people to access SRH services. This is a significant contribution of the UNPS fund.

Supporting Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health in Emergencies (ASRH iE)

Women, girls and young people can be disproportionately affected in any emergencies. In the context of Marshall Islands where two out of three (66%) are below 30 years old², it is particularly important to make sure that the youth population participate in emergency preparedness and response. For this, the project supported the Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health in Emergencies (ASRH*iE*) training to build the capacity of Marshallese youth advocates, youth organizations and networks referred to as Youth Leaders, so that they

² <https://mchb.tvisdata.hrsa.gov/Narratives/Overview/96a89631-c192-463c-91ea-7c85d8e0f877>

can meaningfully participate and engage with service providers, managers and other stakeholders to ensure that Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health is prioritised throughout the development - humanitarian continuum. From 31 October to 3 November 2022, UNFPA supported the Ministry of Health and Human Services (MoHHS) to successfully run the first-ever ASRHiE training in Majuro with 14 youth leaders (17-24 years) selected by the Ministry of Culture and Internal Affairs (MoCIA) from Wotja, Mili atoll, Aur atoll, Ebeye and Majuro.

The training was sequenced well with UNFPA’s continued support towards RMI to build its capacity to implement the MISP for Sexual and Reproductive Health at the onset of a crisis.



Figure 7: ASRHiE Training in Majuro, RMI

The training has built capacities of youth advocates on ASRHiE and MISP, and provided opportunity for UNFPA to pre-test the newly developed set of ASRH information, education and communication (IEC) package of materials as part of the support through UNPSF. Another result of the training was the ASRHiE Action Plan developed by the youth advocates themselves, which the Ministry of Health and Human Services enthusiastically agreed to take on the accountability for follow-up and execution in 2023.

CHALLENGES

System-related challenges

- UNPSF was created to **improve co-ordination across initiatives with similar objectives**. There are some improvements in this area that are more visible within the country across different Government departments and Ministries. However, there is far greater potential for inter-country and regional co-ordination for exchange of good practices and lessons learnt to be able to realize the larger goals of this initiative.

- **Limited trained human resources** at both national and state levels within the Government interferes with programme delivery and leads to over dependence on international expertise that may not always be invested in institution strengthening and was harder to access during COVID-19.
- The lack of integration and decentralization leads to **siloed programming and services** that do not comprehensively meet the needs of people and also make it difficult to set up accountability mechanisms.

Socio-cultural challenges

- **Myths and stigma around SRH issues** prevent access to services especially for women and young people.
- **Deeply entrenched social norms** that condone gender-based violence in communities lead to difficulty in reporting and accessing redressal.

Location related challenges

- **In RMI and many other Pacific Island Countries and Territories (PICTs), the remoteness to/from neighboring (outer) islands** makes it difficult to provide and access health, education and social protection services.

Challenges in embedding and prioritizing CSE/FLE in School Curriculum

- In-school Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) / Family Life Education (FLE) led by the national Ministries of Education is a **highly process-heavy initiative** with multiple and sequential milestones that take approximately 2 academic cycles. The above challenge is compounded by the fact that CSE/FLE is not universally accepted as a positive educational input to enhance health and well-being of young people and is **de-prioritized over scholastic subjects**. Hence, continued advocacy with the relevant stakeholders including Education Ministries, school administration and parents is crucial at all stages of the programme.

The COVID-19 pandemic

- COVID-19 led to curtailed SRH budgets and re-purposing of the health workforce to contribute to the pandemic response in terms of creating awareness around COVID appropriate behaviours, improving immunization and managing the active cases.
- COVID-19 led to school closures and deployment of education workforce to community awareness campaigns thereby relegating FLE to the background.
- While largely disruptive, the COVID-19 pandemic accelerated the use of online learning and interactions and urged programmes to work together more effectively with stronger collaboration and coordination.

LESSONS LEARNT

- **Evidence-based advocacy with a range of stakeholders should be the modus operandi** in the Pacific especially on the sensitive and culturally entrenched issues of SRH and reproductive rights, rather than a damage containment approach. Advocacy

efforts should aim to integrate youth SRH issues in the national strategic development plans to ensure continuity and support even if there are changes in the programme leadership.

- The national governance structures in some of the PICTs provide **autonomy to sub-national geographies/ provinces**. In these contexts, besides the advocacy at the national level, evidence-based and contextualized advocacy is also needed in the sub-national geographies to prioritize youth SRH. For example, in FSM, each of the 4 states (Pohnpei, Yap, Chuuk, Kosrae) is autonomous in terms of their health and education policies and requires a tailored advocacy approach to promote youth SRH.
- It is **critical to engage at both senior and functional levels of governance** at the planning stage and throughout the year to track progress and address constraints in a timely manner.
- To optimize the scarce resources, it is important to **emphasize joint planning and execution** by relevant stakeholders. Based on its long standing and positive relationships with the Government, UNFPA can take the lead to coordinate across Government departments, relevant donors, CSOs and academia.
- **Investments in multi-sectoral partnerships**, clarifying roles of different partners and leveraging strengths of diverse partners for increased synergies will yield rich dividends in terms of meeting project goals and sustaining them.
- Government departments are overburdened with competing priorities. In several situations, capacities are sub-optimal. Based on a needs assessment, it may be useful to **supplement HR in the Government** early in the project cycle to achieve the goals. As part of institution strengthening, it is important to **identify champions from within the system** and nurture them.
- To **enhance sustainability**, it is useful to have a **well-defined exit plan** that clearly defines roles, increasing responsibilities for Government counterparts over a period of time and/or support for new positions to carry out new functions.
- It is important to build the **focus on achieving results** in planning and implementation and **invest in increasing capacities in programme management** for improved results. This emerged as a clear ask from the discussions held by the PSRO team along with the national teams in FSM and RMI in November 2022.
- Lack of efficiency in data management leads to critical information not being available in a timely manner that can impact project progress and remedial actions. Hence, it is important to work with countries to **harmonize their monitoring and evaluation frameworks** to facilitate timely data collection, reporting through regular platforms, analysis and dissemination.
- FSM and RMI have articulated the need for creating **knowledge and experience sharing platforms** at an optimal frequency.
- There is a strong need for **enhanced youth leadership and engagement** to deal with the SRH concerns from their perspective. Youth participation structures such as the youth clubs can provide important avenues to young people to plan and lead activities that serve their interest, leveraging social media, radio, television etc.



Figure 8: Youth in FSM

- **Parents' engagement and community buy-in** is critical and platforms such as Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs) must be activated and create opportunities for more dialogue between youth needs and aspirations.

BEST PRACTICES

- UNFPA has served the North Pacific for three decades. The UNPSF support in the past 2.5 years has enabled **strengthened partnerships with Ministries** of Health, Education, Youth, Women and Culture to facilitate prioritization of youth SRH. Importantly, Government Departments and Ministries recognize the **complementarity in their work** and are more committed to leverage their collective strengths to better serve the interests of young people in diverse settings. For example, the inter-sectoral co-ordination demonstrated through national committees with joint participation from Ministries of Health and Education is a good practice that has decreased the resistance towards dealing with SRH issues of young people. In RMI, MoHHS has shown interest in integrating elements of the MISP in the training curriculum of their health assistants (HAs) which is an excellent opportunity to orient all the HAs to MISP on a long-term basis.
- Investments in **diverse partnerships**, including the Government, development partners, civil society and academia **are building synergies across programmes and stakeholders**. For example, RMI's Ministry of Health and World Bank supported Early Childhood initiative have demonstrated interest in working with UNFPA to bring on board a cadre of multipurpose female workers who can provide a range of health and nutrition services including SRH services on the outer islands to serve the more vulnerable.

- The focus on **evidence-based advocacy** has proved to be a rewarding strategy. The youth policy in RMI, national FLE committees to provide CSE/FLE to young people in schools and communities have helped to create a more enabling environment for SRH in these countries.



Figure 9: Primary school students in RMI

OPPORTUNITIES

- **Leveraging existing Government initiatives to meet the complementary goals of UNPSF and UNFPA:** In RMI, the increased buy-in from the Government, particularly the Ministries of Health & Human Services (MOHHS), Education and Culture & Internal Affairs on improving youth SRH and well-being provides an excellent opportunity to leverage existing Government initiatives to reach out to the more vulnerable populations. For example, youth SRH services can be integrated in the **Neighboring (Outer) Islands Enhanced Service Delivery Contracts** between local Governments in the outer islands and MoHHS to ensure delivery & access to key SRH services to young people. This approach will go a long way in building sustainability as this is a high priority Government initiative aimed at improving health services in remote locations.
- It is important to scout for and build upon opportunities to **integrate UNFPA and UNPSF mandates within national institutional mechanisms**. For example, integration of youth SRH issues in the national development plan for FSM would be a high-end advocacy strategy to allocate national resources for both UNPSF and UNFPA mandates in the interest of young people.



Figure 10: Senior Government and UNFPA officials in FSM during a handover event of the National Adolescents and Youth-Friendly Health Services Guidelines

- In addition to working with the Government institutions, it is important to invest in creating **community structures to create a positive environment for discussions on SRH (duty bearers, community, parents) provision of psychosocial support and easy access to services.**
- Investments in **operations research** are well placed to find out what approaches are successfully achieving objectives to scale them up and not invest in approaches that are not yielding results.
- Despite the constraints imposed by COVID-19, the willingness and agility of countries to adapt to the virtual mode of training and meetings wherever possible helped in meeting some of the crucial programme targets. PICTs are eager to explore **technology-based solutions** and it may be worthwhile to continue to invest in enhanced infrastructure and capacities for technology-based solutions for increased efficiencies in post COVID contexts as well. Technology may help with reaching the remote outer islands and provide confidential and high-quality psycho-social support to young people through options such as the helplines.
- The Transformative Agenda workshop in November that brought together Government departments, CSOs, academia, regional partners from 8 countries provided a powerful platform to exchange, learn, find solutions and inspire one another. If not possible across the Pacific, it would be meaningful to create these **exchange platforms** in different parts of the Pacific, such as one forum for the Micronesian countries.
- Phase 1 of the UNPSF will end on June 30, 2023. By leveraging on the enabling environment and existing partnerships; the focus for the next 6 months is to accelerate progress towards achievements of committed results and align protocols, guidelines, resource materials related to AYSRH services and CSE/FLE to global standards while retaining their relevance in the Pacific context.

SUSTAINABILITY PLANS

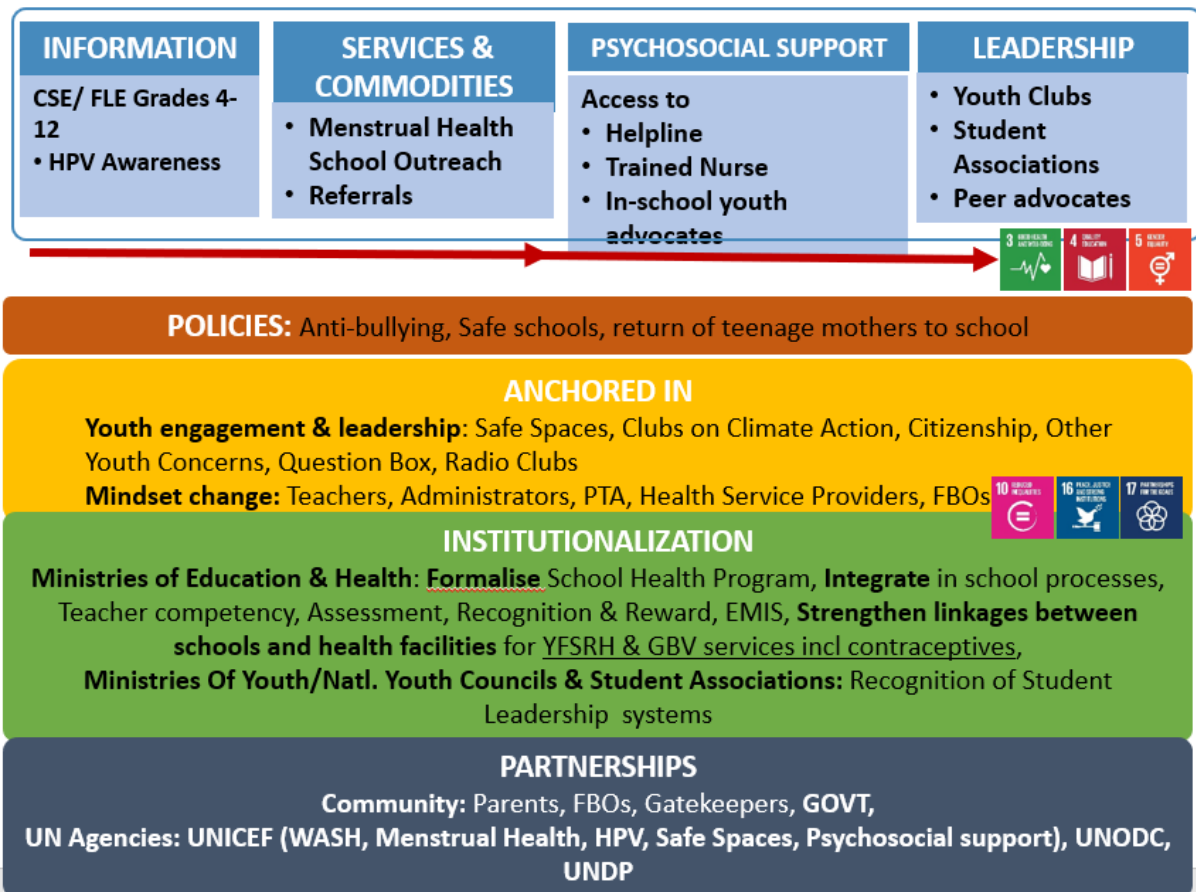
- UNFPA's priority is to serve the member states. The organization's strategic approach is to work in partnership with the national/ sub-national Governments, focus on institution strengthening, set up demonstration projects within the system and invest in capacity building initiatives to enable Government counterparts to meet international standards, as relevant. Sustaining positive change in the lives of people it serves is at the core of all UNFPA supported initiatives.
- In UNPSF supported initiatives, technical partners, such as Family Planning New South Wales have been deployed to enable national Governments to meet international standards. Efforts are also being made to identify and nurture talent from within the region rather than investing in international expertise only. In-service training and mentorship mechanisms are being established to support Government institutions and systems.
- UNFPA also fosters in-country partnerships with Civil Society, communities and key target audience (for example, the young people for CSE/FLE, youth friendly guidelines and services) so that initiatives are contextualized, remain relevant to Pacific island countries and are owned by the Government.

The above-mentioned efforts should enhance political will, Government ownership and sustain the gains consolidated during project life.

- UNFPA will work with national Governments to pitch for funding to continue the important work on SRHR of young people in the North Pacific.

Annexure 1: Proposed Model

Youth SRH, Well Being and Leadership in Schools



Annexure 2: MERL Table

UNPSF Phase I Update from UNFPA

Until 31 December 2022

Overview

UNFPA contributes towards youth sexual and reproductive health in FSM, RMI and Solomon Islands under the **Outcome 4** on equitable basic services.

Under this Outcome, overall progress is **on track** to achieve the committed results despite the fact that the COVID-19 pandemic greatly hindered program delivery and required a high degree of work plan adaptation. UNFPA team should be able to achieve the committed results in the Phase 1 extension phase by June 2023.

Progress

OUTCOME 4: Equitable Basic Services: By 2022, more people in the Pacific, particularly the most vulnerable, have increased equitable access to and utilization of inclusive, resilient and quality basic services.

Indicators	Target by 2022	Progress until 31 December 2022	Comments
Number of unintended pregnancies averted	FSM: 894 RMI: 729 Sols: 13,367 (Target for 2021)	FSM: 590 RMI: 885 Sols: 10,170 (2021)	It may be noted that the actual data on this indicator is only available for the first 3 quarters of 2022 for FSM and RMI and the Q4 information is based on extrapolation. For Solomon Islands, the data for 2021 is presented in the absence of other data at this point of reporting.
<i>Service Delivery Points (SDPs) providing quality assured adolescent friendly integrated SRH services</i> <i>It may be noted that the AYFSRH services in Solomon Islands is mainly supported through DFAT funding with incremental support from UNPSF.</i>			
1.1 Proportion of targeted* Service Delivery Points (SDPs) reporting	FSM: 25% RMI: 25%	FSM: 80% RMI: 50%	Achieved

Indicators	Target by 2022	Progress until 31 December 2022	Comments
quality assured adolescent-friendly integrated SRH services	SIs: 25%	SIs: 75%	*Targeted implies secondary and tertiary SDPs. There are 5 targeted SDPs in FSM, 2 in RMI and 11 in Solomon Islands.
1.1.2 Percentage of targeted SDPs with at least 1 service provider trained on youth friendly SRH services	No specific target in the MERL table	FSM: Yes RMI: Yes	<p>FSM: ToT completed with 26 master trainers who have trained service providers so that across the 4 states of FSM, there are 57 trained service providers to provide AYFSRH services.</p> <p>RMI: The targeted SDPs have at least 1 service provider trained on youth-friendly SRH services.</p> <p>In Q1 2023, 15 master trainers will be oriented to further train health assistants in outer islands and additional health facilities in Ebeye and Majuro to have approximately 30 service providers trained on youth friendly services. RMI intends to include select school teachers and health assistants as first responders.</p> <p>Training of master trainers had to be postponed to Q1 2023 due to the surge in COVID cases in August and then outbreak of flu in November.</p>
1.1.3 Number of countries with national guidelines for delivering youth friendly SRH services, according to international standards.	FSM: Yes RMI: Yes SIs: Yes	FSM: Yes RMI: Yes SIs: Yes	Achieved

Indicators	Target by 2022	Progress until 31 December 2022	Comments
<p align="center">Number of countries that have the capacity to implement the Minimum Initial Service Package (MISP) at the onset of crises</p> <p align="center"><i>It may be noted that MISP work in Solomon Islands is not supported through UNPSF.</i></p>			
2.1 Number of countries that have the capacity to implement the Minimum Initial Service Package (MISP) at the onset of crises	FSM: Yes RMI: Yes	FSM: Yes RMI: Yes	Achieved
2.1.1 Number of trained providers on MISP	No specific targets in the MERL table	FSM: 48 RMI: 37	FSM: 48 trained service providers with capacities to deliver lifesaving interventions during emergencies across Pohnpei and Yap. RMI: Service providers including 6 professionals (obstetricians, midwives and nurses) and 17 Health Assistants who are the first responders in an emergency in the neighboring islands have been oriented to MISP. In addition, 14 youth volunteers have been oriented to ASRH in emergencies.
2.1.2 Roster of trained personnel available	Roster available	FSM: Yes RMI: Yes	Achieved
2.1.3 Logistics structure established for distribution and use of emergency RH kits	No specific targets in the MERL	FSM: Yes RMI: Yes	Achieved FSM: Contraceptive Logistics Management System (CLMS) SOP drafted and validated in 3 out of 4 states. RMI: 500 Dignity Kits and 400 Clean Delivery Kits were prepositioned in Majuro, RMI to ensure

Indicators	Target by 2022	Progress until 31 December 2022	Comments
			<p>rapid deployment of these emergency supplies when and if needed.</p> <p>The distribution from the Central Medical Store to 2 hospitals and 50 functioning health centers (also on outer islands) has been completed.</p>

Indicators	Target by 2022	Progress until 31 December 2022	Comments
<p>Improved access to Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE)/ Family Life Education (FLE) for youth in school with a special focus on very young adolescent girls. <i>It may be noted that the in-school CSE/ FLE work in Solomon Islands is not supported through UNPSF.</i></p>			
3.1 In-school FLE in all countries is adapted to meet international standards.	<p>FSM: Yes</p> <p>RMI: Yes</p>	<p>FSM: Yes</p> <p>RMI: Yes</p>	Achieved
3.2 Number of countries that have operationalised school-based comprehensive Family Life Education curricula in accordance with international standards.	<p>FSM: Yes</p> <p>RMI: Yes</p>	<p>FSM: Under progress</p> <p>RMI: Yes</p>	<p>Please see sub-indicators 3.2.1 – 3.2.5 below for the progress against this indicator. Only the last sub-indicator on teacher training is pending in FSM.</p>
3.2.1 Country has designated team to support CSE/FLE national advocacy and integration	<p>FSM: Yes</p> <p>RMI: Yes</p>	<p>FSM: Yes</p> <p>RMI: Yes</p>	Achieved
3.2.2 Country has CSE/FLE content gap analysis completed	<p>FSM: Yes</p> <p>RMI: Yes</p>	<p>FSM: Yes</p> <p>RMI: Yes</p>	Achieved

Indicators	Target by 2022	Progress until 31 December 2022	Comments
3.2.3 Country has completed scoping and sequencing for CSE/FLE targeted syllabi	FSM: Yes RMI: Yes	FSM: Yes RMI: Yes	Achieved
3.2.4 Country has revised and validated the integrated CSE/FLE syllabi	FSM: Yes RMI: Yes	FSM: Yes RMI: Yes	Achieved FSM: Completed curriculum revision for Grades 6 – 8 RMI: Completed curriculum revision and integration in relevant subjects of Social Science, Sciences and Health for grades 4-6.
3.2.5 Training of teachers	FSM: Yes RMI: Yes	FSM: Under progress RMI: Yes	FSM: Postponed to Q1 2023 RMI: 10 teachers/principals from 3 pilot schools in Ebeye attended FLE training of teachers from 12 – 15 December 2022. Another orientation will be organized in Majuro in early 2023.

The out-of-school FLE work was not committed to in the work plan but was identified as an important priority in **FSM**. It is led by the Department of Health and Social Affairs in close coordination with the CSOs, Micronesian Productions and Chuuk Women’s Council. The resource materials comprising of 6 modules have been validated by 11 relevant stakeholders representing both the Govt and the CSOs. This initiative will be further supported by the Spotlight Initiative in the future. The out of school CSE/ FLE work is also progressing in RMI and Solomon Islands. It is supported through the Spotlight initiative in RMI and through the Transformative Agenda in Solomon Islands.

The UNPSF supported the development of **National Youth Policy in RMI** that was released in 2022.

UN Pacific Strategy Fund

Annual Progress Report

For the Period January - December 2022

Contextual Shifts and Implementation Status

COVID-19 impacted Pacific countries like Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu and the Solomon Islands in 2022, resulting in Governments shifting from regular programming to COVID-19 response. In addition to COVID-19, Tonga experienced the Hunga-Tonga-Hunga-Ha'apai underwater volcano and tsunami, which caused further disruptions. UNICEF worked closely with all the countries to respond to emergencies and supported them with regular programming. The second half of 2022 witnessed significant improvements when most PICTs reopened their borders, paving the way for economic recovery, implementation of programmes and renewed partnerships. The pandemic also renewed focus and investments in public health systems, providing an opportunity to build on COVID-19 response and improve public health in the Region.

Within this context, in July 2022, leaders at the 51st Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Meeting endorsed the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent as the overarching blueprint to advance the Pacific. In addition, the Leaders reiterated the importance of a long-term vision for the Region, highlighting the importance of Pacific diplomacy to promote social, cultural, environmental and economic progress for all Pacific Islanders.

The Pacific Island Countries and Territories remain extremely vulnerable to climate change and other natural disasters, such as frequent tropical cyclones, earthquakes, and volcanic eruptions. The pandemic's impact was compounded by the vulnerability of the Pacific to recurrent natural disasters and climate-related shocks. During 2022, PICTs experienced three humanitarian emergencies, including a volcanic eruption and tsunami in Tonga, affecting 99 per cent of the country's population; drought in Kiribati, with 79 per cent of the population affected; and drought in Tuvalu, where 86 per cent of the country's population were experiencing drought as the first community transmission of COVID-19 was detected.

Changes in Government in Fiji and Vanuatu and senior leadership at the Ministry of Education and Training in Tonga required additional briefings to support advancing planned activities. New relations had to be established with the new leaders before commencing the activities with their leadership. While these delays were outside of UNICEF's control, the team worked with Governments to ensure that progress continued. As a result, strong relations have been established, and Fiji and Tonga are now fully poised to implement and accelerate ECE activities. In Vanuatu, the recent cyber-attack on the country's online government networks resulted in numerous challenges. With the system down from November 2022 until early January 2023, communications with Government were limited. This meant delays in the processing and compilation of birth registration data for 2022. Further, for the MICS, the UNICEF technical team could not communicate with the Government, causing delays in finalizing survey tools.

On 17 November 2022, UNICEF supported MWCSO in convening the first-ever multisectoral meeting for ECD held at the Tanoa Hotel. Hon. Leota Laki Lamositele, Minister of Women, Community and Social Development, opened the meeting and highlighted the importance of ECD as a component of achieving the development objectives of Samoa. The meeting was attended by representatives from MWCSO, MoF, Ministry of Education, Sports and Culture (MESC), Ministry of Health (MoH), and the National Council of ECE. In addition, UNICEF's policy specialists gave a virtual technical presentation on ECD policy planning, followed by an open discussion on the proposed timeline of activities.

Achievements of the Fund: Outcome-Level Results

Results

Outcome 4: Equitable Basic Services

- **Early Childhood Education (ECE):** Evidence-based plans, systems, curricula and teacher training for early childhood education (ECE) were strengthened across the Pacific.

In **Fiji**, progress has been made toward developing a new ECE policy and curriculum for 5-year-olds. The National ECE Taskforce, formed in 2021, led the establishment of a technical working group for curriculum design following a national ECE diagnostic workshop and two sub-national validation workshops. The strategies developed through participatory workshop approaches will inform the policy and curriculum development.

In **Tuvalu**, the ECE policy has been submitted for final review before endorsement, which is expected in early 2023. The priorities and strategies underpinning this review were informed by the ECE diagnostic workshop held in December 2021. In addition, modules for teacher training based on the new Tuvalu National Early Childhood Curriculum Framework are currently being drafted through consultative workshops with the training of teachers; this is expected in the first half of 2023.

In 2022, access to ECE services has expanded across **Tonga** as 46 new government ECE services have been opened nationwide with UNICEF support, increasing access to quality early learning with a high-quality curriculum and trained ECE teachers. These new services were only made possible following the national scale-up of training of ECE teachers, ensuring that 90% of all ECE teachers were trained on teacher guidance, planning processes and early learning standards for children despite having to confront multiple emergencies for the first half of the year. Following the 2021 training on core competencies for ECE teachers conducted, 20 master trainers were trained (ToT) in 2022, which led to the expansion of services. In addition, the Ministry of Education proudly launched the 'Learning to Play the Heilala Way' ECE curriculum and Key

Indicators for Learning Success in conjunction with World Children's Day in November 2022 (see the link to UNICEF Pacific Facebook post).

The enabling environment and committed ministerial leadership to proceed full steam ahead was crucial to achieving this momentous shift in elevating the status of the ECE sub-sector in this reporting period. For example, at a recent UNESCO World ECCE Conference in Uzbekistan, the Minister of Education in Tonga, who is also the Prime Minister, related the steady progress made by Tonga in such a short time in strengthening the foundations for early learning.

Following the full integration of ECE priorities and strategies in 2021 within the National Education Action Plan (NEAP), **Solomon Islands** is developing a comprehensive national communication strategy for the Pre-Primary Year (PPY) programme and collecting initial data for the commencement of the formative evaluation of PPY in this reporting period.

Vital ECE teacher resources for planning, observation, and school readiness were supplied to the Ministry of Education in Vanuatu.

- **Birth registration (BR)**

In **Kiribati**, the Births, Marriages and Death (BMD) Act amendment has been finalized and is ready for its first parliamentary reading in 2023. The amendment ensures more births are registered by limiting the registration timeframe to 1 month (from 1 year) and accepting overseas certificates. In addition, since the roll-out of the electronic BR system in February 2022, 5,794 new births have been registered on the system (50% female). In addition, the system allows for disaggregation of home births vs hospital/clinic births and by location. Of the 5,794 births, around 2% were home births, and 23% were births registered in outer islands.

In **Samoa**, 32 BMD staff were trained on improving existing systems in 2022. Discussions on joint programming with UNDP's Accelerator Lab on CRVS improvements are ongoing. The birth registration data for 2022 in Samoa will be available following their mid-year review in December.

In the **Solomon Islands**, the Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (CRVS) Act amendment consultations carried out in three provinces have been completed, and the report finalized. The drafting instructions have also been completed through UNICEF technical support, with a cabinet paper submitted. The legislative revision will enable the decentralization of birth registration services to the provinces, as the current law limits birth registration to only the central level. In addition, the proposed amendment will station Civil Registration Officers at the provincial level, increasing access to birth registration services. Training on using the new birth registration system Promadis has been completed in Western, Choiesul, Makira and Malaita Provinces. In 2022, 21,175 (new birth registrations occurred in the Solomon Islands. Of the 21,175 registrations, 3,101 were registrations of children aged one or less, while the total new birth registrations of children aged 0 to 18 were 8,502). The full roll-out of the Promadis system is anticipated to accelerate newborn registration in the coming years.

In **Vanuatu**, the Civil Registration and Identity Management (CRIM) Act 2021 and National Identity Card Act 2021 were passed by parliament in 2021. A draft CRIM policy has been circulated for review to partners while the National Identity Card Policy is being drafted. UNDP, UNESCAP and UNICEF support both policies. During the issuance of national ID cards and birth registration certificates, it was discovered that 80% of Vanuatu's population over 18 years of age have a birth registration certificate or national ID card. However, the recent cyber-attack on the country's online government networks resulted in delays in the processing and compilation of birth registration data for 2022. The national system is yet to recover from this online attack fully.

- **Early Childhood Development (ECD)**

With UNICEF support, Tuvalu and the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) are on track to developing their national multisectoral ECD policies and costed action plans, which help frame a comprehensive support package for young children and families in both countries.

In **FSM**, a final version of the national ECD policy is ready and awaiting Cabinet endorsement by early 2023. Meanwhile, all four states are finalizing their state-level costed action plans for ECD. These policy tools were informed by nationwide consultations, with UNICEF partnering with four state-level partners to conduct the consultations that reached over 600 participants: Pohnpei Women's Council in Pohnpei, Kosrae Women's Association in Kosrae, Caroline College and Pastoral Institute in Chuuk, and Tamil Women's Association in Yap. In Pohnpei, these community consultations led to the state's passage of the first maternity leave policy. UNICEF is also strengthening the Presidential National Advisory Committee on Children (PNACC), which was reinstated in 2022 and tasked to coordinate across ministries and stakeholders to champion the ECD agenda in FSM.

In **Tuvalu**, UNICEF also supported the establishment of a national ECD coordination mechanism, the National ECD Advisory Committee. Chaired by the Chief Executive Officer of the Minister of Education and Youth, the National ECD Advisory Committee comprised representatives from the Ministries of Education and Youth, Department of Climate Change and Disaster, Tuvalu Family Health, Association of Disabled People, Ministry of Finance, Office of the Attorney General and Ministry of Local Government and Agriculture. The Committee has spearheaded ongoing nationwide consultations to inform the development of multisectoral ECD policy tools. The national consultations have been conducted with Funafuti, North and

South islands, with over 100 community members, including community leaders, faith leaders and parents. UNICEF also supported the recruitment and ongoing capacity-building of a national ECD coordinator responsible for managing multi-ministry initiatives for young children. These consultations have also led to mapping ECD services covering seven ECD service providers in Funafuti.

At the **regional level**, UNICEF supported the monitoring progress on the Pasifika Call to Action on ECD with a comprehensive survey covering 15 Pacific Island Countries. The comprehensive survey was designed in consultation with Pacific countries to ensure the survey methodology is context-relevant and responsive to Pacific needs. Data was collected via intense follow-ups with ECD focal points across the 15 Pacific Island countries. Data analyses have already been completed. A draft report is now being reviewed by UNICEF and Pacific governments, with plans to finalize and disseminate the report before the 2023 Pacific ECD Forum.

To increase the understanding of Pacific countries and their investments in young children, UNICEF has supported the Governments of Kiribati, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu with a multisectoral expenditure tracking and budget analysis for ECD. The results of this ECD expenditure analysis were incorporated in a paper disseminated to the 2022 Forum Economic Ministers (FEMM) in their meeting in August 2022 in Vanuatu. The paper, drafted by UNICEF, in collaboration with PIFS and SPC, builds on previous ECD papers presented to FEMM, highlighting how appropriate and effective ECD systems are critical in delivering on children's rights, responding effectively to human capital shocks brought on by COVID-19 and other shocks, and contributing to long term socio-economic development. ECD at FEMM remains a strategic priority, as FEMM plays a critical role in strengthening policy cohesion on the economic priorities and policy positions of the Pacific and is an important standing meeting to assist and inform Forum Leaders of relevant economic and development issues facing the region.

With the support of UNICEF, the regional council for ECD (PRC4ECD) also launched its Pacific Child website at the 51st Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Meeting (PIFLM) in July 2022 and called for a region-wide commitment to ECD and Climate Change. At this event, Forum Chair and Fiji Prime Minister Hon Josaia Voreqe Bainimarama and Samoa Prime Minister Hon Afioga Fiame Naomi Mata'afa urged those present to commit to investing in young children as a pathway for climate resilience. Furthermore, they recognized that it was critical to invest in ECD now to support the innovators and leaders of the 2050 Blue Pacific. Following this, UNICEF also convened the first-ever Partners Talanoa on ECD in July 2022, where key partners discussed harmonizing support for ECD across the region.

- **First 1,000 days**

In **Kiribati**, a national guideline for implementation was developed and rolled out to complement home fortification of food with multi-nutrient powders (MNPs) was initiated in August 2021 to reduce anemia among young children and in line with the High Impact Nutrition Intervention Framework. With funds from this grant, UNICEF trained 196 health workers, 27 Medical Assistants, 113 Nursing Officers, 111 Nurse aides and 46 volunteers on implementing, rolling out and monitoring the MNP linked with promoting nutritious complementary food for children 6-23 months of age. The training was developed based on a series of participatory action workshops conducted with health workers and caregivers to assess the knowledge of anemia and MNPs, food preparation and timing preferences, perceived side-effects, potential barriers and facilitating factors to MNP compliance. UNICEF also conducted awareness sessions for the ten island councils that govern the eight islands for which the MNP roll-out will be implemented. In addition, UNICEF Nutrition staff and Ministry of Health counterparts are monitoring the eight islands and ten island councils for which the MNP programme has been rolled out.

In **Vanuatu**, UNICEF supported printing the Vanuatu High Impact Nutrition Interventions (HINI) Guideline. The guideline aims to improve the nutritional status, growth, development and health of infants and young children through optimal maternal nutrition and protecting, promoting and supporting optimal safe infant and young child feeding and nutrition practices. The guidelines include the following:

- Guidance for government and all stakeholders on implementing nutrition services to achieve optimal maternal nutrition for fetal, infant, and young child development; and for caregivers of children under five years.
- Operationalization of the WHO/UNICEF Global Strategy for Infant and Young Child Feeding 46 for Vanuatu.
- Mechanisms to harmonize maternal, infant and young child feeding and nutrition messages across all levels of care.

The guideline is targeted for use by healthcare workers, managers, supervisors, and teachers who implement maternal, child health and nutrition-related programmes. It is applicable at all levels: national, provincial, and facility levels, and for use by NGOs and in pre-primary childcare and education programmes. The document guides the implementation of evidence-based nutrition interventions using a holistic lifecycle approach focused on women before, during and after pregnancy and; caregivers of infants and young children under five years of age.

UNICEF also supported the distribution of nutrition supplies in the Sanma and Penama Provinces. To date, 42 health facilities across the two provinces have received essential nutrition supplies. In addition, distribution is planned for Malampa Province. UNICEF also distributed baby weight scales to Malampa and Sanma.

Despite the complexities of implementing routine activities during the COVID-19 pandemic, early essential newborn care (EENC) and kangaroo mother care training was provided to 47 health workers from Malampa, Penama and Sanma provinces. Focus was on EENC - the consideration given to a baby during delivery and the first days after birth. In addition, the training provided coaching for health workers in the management of routine deliveries and the management of non-breathing babies. The aim is to upgrade the skills of health workers providing routine childbirth and newborn care, using a clinical coaching approach that integrates the practicing of sequential steps to providing newborn care to both breathing and non-breathing babies. Importantly, the training aims to create a sense of value in these skills to promote consistent practice at every delivery.

In **FSM**, UNICEF supported the development of the HINI Framework and Guidelines. FSM has high rates of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) such as diabetes type 2, high blood pressure, heart diseases and cancers, as noted by the WHO STEP surveys conducted in-country from 2007 to 2011. In addition to the NCDs, stunting among the under five years old is envisaged to be a critical challenge in FSM and achieving and maintaining lower levels of prevalence must continue to be the goal in scaling-up nutrition services. Stunting must be tackled from pre-conception to when the baby is two years old - after which stunting is largely irreversible. The FSM Nutrition Action Plan (NAP) outlines the actions that sectors need to implement collaboratively up to the year 2030 and has also been costed. It is currently pending endorsement in Cabinet.

In **RMI**, UNICEF supported the development, approving, and launching of the RMI HINI Framework and Guidelines. A 2017 Integrated Child Health and Nutrition Survey in RMI reported high child stunting and maternal overweight and obesity. Follow-up formative research in nutrition and WASH revealed some key interventions needed in RMI, including robust SBCC interventions. Further, a nutrition gap analysis assessment conducted in 2009 identified policy, strategic and operational gaps in various sectors. Through these efforts, the RMI prioritized HINI to facilitate sustained improvements in maternal, infant and young child health and nutrition. However, due to the multisectoral nature of the priority nutrition interventions, there was an urgent need to clearly outline the actions needed, the role of each sector, how collaboration will be fostered, and how the actions will be monitored and evaluated. The M-HINI Framework aims to guide the five-year implementation of interventions to reduce stunting among children under five, prevent micronutrient malnutrition, and avert maternal and child obesity. This will be achieved by scaling-up eight groups of interventions targeting the critical 1,000-day window of opportunity – from conception to 2 years of age. The framework's purpose is to provide overarching direction in implementing, monitoring, and evaluating actions HINI, which, if implemented to scale and in the right quality, will significantly improve maternal, infant and young child nutrition by 2025.

- **Immunization**

With support from UNICEF, MoH **Fiji** immunized 28,297 children with the supplementary measles vaccination in the measles catch-up campaign in Macuata in Northern Division, Rewa and Nasinu in Central Divisions. The overall coverage was 51.34%.

In **FSM**, UNICEF supported the procurement of 42 ice-lined refrigerators (20 to replace obsolete equipment in the National store plus the 4 State stores; and 22 to equip health facilities in-country), five freezers and five ultra-low temperature refrigerators (to boost storage capacity for Pfizer vaccines). UNICEF also procured a toolkit for maintaining and repairing the cold chain equipment.

In **RMI**, routine immunization coverage plummeted from 81% in 2018 to 67% in 2022, before and during the pandemic. Factors such as total lockdown, dearth of health workers with the few existing re-assigned primarily to COVID-19 response, and fear of infection reducing health facility visits; contributed to the decrease in coverage. With funds from this project, UNICEF supported the Expanded Programme of Immunization (EPI) catch-up campaign in:

- Microplanning - conducted using household enumeration at catchment areas around the 56 participating health facilities. The result was the enhancement of clinic capacity to conduct two monthly outreach and quarterly mobile sessions on 14 remote islands of RMI. The plan also identified the need to provide chairs at Majuro's four established health outposts.
- Coordination - The catch-up campaign leveraged the existing COVID-19 governance structure to coordinate the intervention. It was a prominent agenda item at coordination meetings. Focus was on the integration of the project delivery with COVID-19 mass vaccination.
- Logistics - organization and management of the flow of supplies were implemented with the support of the logistics team. Key functions conducted include 1. supervisors' phones recharged with cell data to enable communication with command centres, internet services and real-time SMS data reporting, 2. hiring of tables and chairs for the four newly established Majuro Health Outposts to enable the comfort of waiting caregivers, 3. Production/ printing and distribution of adverse events following immunization (AEFI) Reporting Tools, 4. Production/printing of targeted Flip Charts, 5. Training for 10 Senior Supervisors
- Human Resource and Service delivery - 124 Health workers from 56 Health Facilities were supported and mobilized to integrate the COVID-19 response with routine immunization at the outer islands of Majuro and Ebeye—a team comprised of two vaccinators, two recorders, one screener and one community mobilizer. Teams were tasked with conducting one fixed session and two monthly outreach sessions at the 56 health facilities over six months. In addition, a team of 4 persons from General Hospital Majuro and Ebeye conducted two mobile sessions from June to December at hard-to-reach and remote communities.

The EPI catch-up campaign resulted in 94% coverage for DPT3 and 95% coverage for measles-containing vaccines and is still ongoing.

Outcome 5: Governance and Community Engagement

MICS (Joint Programme with UNFPA)

Fiji MICS results were launched, providing reliable national data across various thematic areas on the situation of children and women and filling data gaps for up to 25 Pacific Sustainable Development Indicators and 33 SDG indicators. The results were also published with a user-friendly interactive online dashboard on survey indicators to enable easy access by those in governments, academia, civil societies and development partners to new evidence for programmes, policy planning, monitoring and reporting.

Preparations for MICS **Vanuatu** are underway, and data collection is set for the second quarter of 2023 and the final launch by the end of 2023.

In addition, UNICEF supported **Samoa** in conducting MICS Plus: longitudinal, representative household surveys with interviews conducted over the phone frequently and with near real-time reporting. The results for the first wave on the impact of COVID-19 on the well-being of children, women and families were completed and results disseminated. In total, 12 waves of data collection are planned. MICS Plus is also planned for Fiji, pending the final government clearance.

UNICEF also promoted South-South cooperation to enhance the capacities of Pacific National Statistics Offices (NSOs) in data collection, analysis and use by organizing a Pacific regional MICS workshop where 11 NSOs shared their experiences and committed to peer support in the future.

Challenges, Lessons Learned, Best Practices

- The process of the ECE subsector analysis and plan development leading to a systems approach to ECE with the recognition of ECE as a comprehensive subsector has gained traction and is receiving more prioritized attention by countries in the region that have undergone the sub-sector analysis.
- As international border closures across the region continued to prevent consultants from travelling to programme countries to provide technical assistance to governments in person, UNICEF staff providing technical assistance to governments had to do so remotely.
- In some countries, aid absorption capacity and shortage of dedicated, appropriately qualified human resources for the ECE sub-sector limit the capacity at the implementation and monitoring level.
- COVID-19 restrictions limited training, supervision and monitoring for birth registration services, while Civil Registry (CR) offices were closed to the public during lockdowns. In countries where new CR systems were rolled out, CR officers are adjusting to the new system. As a result, it is anticipated that numbers for registration of newborns will increase once COVID-19 restrictions are fully lifted, and CR systems are fully rolled out in 2023.
- Integrating the COVID-19 response into routine health services is vital to ensure that routine services are not continued to be affected by the pandemic. As many PICTs experienced community transmission for the first time in 2022, this affected movement within the country due to lockdowns, which affected routine immunization coverage and provision of routine health services and regular programming.

Sustainability of the Programme

Outcome 4: Equitable Basic Services

- **ECE:** The partnership supports ministries' visions to fully integrate the ECE subsector within education sector planning processes, ensuring well-resourced ECE subsectors in the target countries, supporting the long-term sustainability of ECE programmes and ensuring dedicated budgets. In the process of developing ECE subsector plans, countries are identifying priorities and strategies addressing five core functions that need to be developed and nurtured specifically for ECE, namely: 1) equitable planning and resource allocation, 2) curriculum implementation, 3) workforce development, 4) family and community engagement, 5) quality assurance. Evidence-based decision-making to ensure equitable access to and participation in quality programmes, especially for young children with a disability or in vulnerable circumstances, underpins each.
- **Birth Registration:** In Kiribati and the Solomon Islands, priorities include passing the CRVS Act amendment bills in parliament and continued training, setup and a full roll-out of the new CR online system Promadis. In Samoa and Vanuatu, the implementation of key recommendations in BR processes with UNESCAP and UNDP will be prioritized.

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UNFPA Contributions: Outcome 5: Data- MICS



Executive Summary

The main objective under Outcome 5: Data (MICS/Census) is to increase public availability and utilization of data on women, children and adolescents to support evidence-based legislation, public policy, and programming in support of Pacific regional and national development priorities.

Under this outcome UNFPA provides technical support to Pacific Island Countries to ensure that:

1. Censuses are of high quality and uphold international principles and standards and produce data that are widely disseminated and utilized for development purposes; this is done in collaboration with SPC Statistics for Development Division.
2. SRH components of the MICS (Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey) are strengthened to meet the data needs of countries and the Domestic Violence (DV) Module of the DHS (Demographic Health Survey) is included in the MICS where countries prioritize VAW (violence against women) data; this is done in collaboration with UNICEF.

In 2022, as in the case of the two previous years within the 2018-2022 Pacific Sub-regional Programme cycle, UNFPA Pacific, with funding support from the New Zealand Government, continued to support the implementation of Population and Housing Censuses as well as the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey with Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) components. The achievements, so far include the digitization of the censuses, using CAPI (Computer Assisted Personal Interviews) and GIS (Geographic Information Systems), in Kiribati, RMI, Samoa, Tonga and Vanuatu, each receiving the varying levels of support necessary to enable this to happen. By taking a regional approach in partnership with SPC, the tools developed could be deployed to all countries while ensuring the necessary customization to address country-specific requirements.

The deployment of digital census has resulted in a reduction in time between enumeration and the availability of census results. In the past, there was a substantive lag between the census data collection and the release of the results. This has made available key population data on women, children and adolescents which is already being utilized to support evidence-based legislation, public policy and programming in support of Pacific regional and national development priorities. The data from the census includes indicators related to mortality, fertility, migration, education, employment, and socio-economic status, all of which can be analysed by key disaggregates such as sex, age, disability and other variables of importance according to the country context. The PHC also provides a comprehensive overview of the housing stock each of these countries.

The modernization of the censuses is a game changer for decision makers in the Pacific Island countries. These data offer entirely new tools for users to map population distributions and coverage of facilities and services during normal times as well as during humanitarian situations, thus offering the potential to assess alignment of service providers to need, spatially, and to map who is left behind for all services provided by public and private sector including SRHR and VAW services. The use of technology will also enable comparability of data across the region and internationally, and sustainability as the country is better positioned to build on its learnings and take further advantage of emerging technology for data dissemination and utilization.

Similarly, the MICS results, achieved through collaboration with UNICEF, has provided a wide range of SRH and DV data including Adolescent Birth Rates (ABR), Age Specific Fertility Rate (ASFR), Contraception Prevalence Rates (CPR), Met and Unmet Need for Family Planning, Skilled Birth Attendance (SBA), quantity and quality of Prenatal and Postnatal care for women, Women's Empowerment, Inter-Partner Violence, and Non-Partner Violence. on fertility, teenage pregnancy, pre- and post-natal care, sexual behaviour, women's empowerment, and inter- and non-partner violence, all of which can be disaggregated by a wide range of socio-economic characteristics also collected through the survey.

Contextual Shifts and Implementation Status (PUNOs to provide inputs)

At the global level, in 2022 UNFPA transitioned to its new Global Strategic Plan 2022-2025, even as the Pacific was in the final year of its Sub-regional Program 2018-2022. This called for reporting under adjusted Outcomes and Outputs while retaining the specificities required to report under differing funding streams. The thematic area previously known as Population and Development which included Data and which comprised one of four thematic areas was renamed to Population Change and Data and now comprises one of six output pillars for UNFPA. The explicit reference to Data under this Output now reflects the importance and emphasis that UNFPA is placing on this work. Alongside this transition, much time and intensive effort was dedicated to the formulation of the UNFPA Pacific 2023 – 2027 Multi-country Program. Population Change and Data was incorporated as one of the six outputs that UNFPA Pacific will continue to support in the new program cycle. Noteworthy is that while UNFPA Pacific will now be able to support more upstream work, due to emerging datasets, such as data utilization for decision-making, it will have to continue to support data availability as the countries' data collection systems still require further strengthening. The new MCP is expected to be approved in early 2023 by the UNFPA Executive Board.

The COVID-19 pandemic continued to affect delivery of in-country technical support to countries during 2022 due to travel restrictions and gradual, very measured, return to a "new normal". This may have impacted quality of results where independent on-the-ground quality control by technical agencies is important. Countries continued to post-pone their census as they tried to "catch-up" with other outstanding data collection activities, for example, FSM postponed its census to 2023. However, a very important positive result from the inability to travel to countries to provide in-person in-country support was that the countries took greater ownership of their census and more responsibility for the implementation. The countries' capacity was built to a greater extent as they had to lead in-country with remote support from UNFPA/SPC.

While the UNPSF Outcome 5 on Data does not have any explicit output related to humanitarian work, as new census datasets become available, they are used to prepare the global CODS (Common Operational Datasets) by UNFPA which are then passed over to UNOCHA for humanitarian preparedness and response planning. The SRH indicators from the MICS along with the population data have also been used by the humanitarian team at UNFPA Pacific to formulate funding proposals and for planning.

The overall progress is on track to achieve the committed results even though the COVID-19 pandemic greatly hindered program delivery and required a high degree of work plan adaptation. UNFPA team should be able to achieve the committed results in the Phase 1 extension phase by June 2023.

Achievements of the Fund (PUNOs to provide inputs)

One of the greatest achievements from this initiative is the regional approach to data collection which created synergies and economies of scale, strengthened user-producer dialogue, and promoted international standards, methodologies, and use of technology.

UNFPA-SPC collaboration on Computer Assisted Personal Interviews (CAPI) and geo-referenced technology was a game changer which enabled Census data collection during the pandemic. It allows for remote transfer of knowledge to countries which includes building capacity, the adaptation of tools to each country's context, testing of these and even enumeration training. The tools enabled remote quality control and timely feedback to the Statistical Offices and their field staff.

UNFPA worked with its regional technical partner, ABC International Development to document the key achievements and learnings of CAPI and geo-referenced technology during this round of censuses. *(This video has been submitted to the RCO for linking into the reports, as needed).*

Through UNFPA's interventions, more attention was given to ensuring a broader participatory approach to the entire data collection process for both census and MICS activities. Although there is still considerably more work to be done in this area, the importance of the stakeholders' genuine participation in the process was recognized and encouraged. The Statistical Offices and even other development agencies do not always promote the idea of data as a public good and the importance of the user, including that the users' participation ultimately determines how the results will be received and the extent that the results will be used for policy development and decision making. The stakeholders better understood the complexities of the data collection process including the challenges that the NSOs face such as funding and the sampling limitations, and how they, the stakeholders, can better support the process.

Although not directly linked to the Data Outcome and Outputs under the UNPSF, UNFPA actively encourages the use of the emerging data from census and MICS. This is the ultimate aim of data collection activities and is broader than the data availability ambitions of this UNPSF initiative. Information is a powerful ingredient for building enabling environments. During this programme cycle, including the year under reporting 2022, UNFPA Pacific supported selected countries to develop various products aimed at improving policy, programs and advocacy in the area of sexual and reproductive health and family planning information and services. Recent data collected through the UNPSF, provided a second or third data point for many indicators prioritized by countries which allows for trend analyses and therefore more forward-looking policies and programs. Census and MICS data were key inputs to the discussions related to the review of existing Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn, Child and Adolescent Health (RMNCAH) policies and strategies and youth-oriented policies and programs. The DHS/MICS data provides the broad picture of the situation at national and sub-national level and enables prioritization of population level changes and target setting, the latter when combined with the census. The fertility levels and met need for contraception captured through the MICS provided a more complete picture of the situation as a sample of all women is taken as opposed to only those accessing MHMS services.

Data from Census and MICS/DHS have been used in the preparation of Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) on SDG progress. It allowed UNFPA to position and prioritize SRH and GBV on national agendas. It was also extensively used in the development of the United Nations Common Country Assessments which began during the latter part of 2021 and continued into 2022. This demographic intelligence provided the premise for prioritization of support to health including SRH and GBV and youth concerns, among all other development priorities, during the next UN cycle 2023 - 2027. It also included the prioritization of Demographic Dividend within the UNSDCF. Population data and indicators from MICS-DHS have served as input into other products such as scenario setting during the COVID and when developing investment cases for SRH and GBV.

Capacities gained with this initiative can be used not only for similar future activities such as repeat rounds of the MICS and other censuses, but are transferrable to other data collection activities including, with some adaptations, the collection of administrative data.

Results Section

Outcome-Level Results

SPC-UNFPA collaboration on Computer Assisted Personal Interviews (CAPI) and geo-referenced technology is a game changer and has enabled MICS and Census data collection during the pandemic, quality control and timely feedback to field staff, transfer of knowledge to countries and adaptation to country context, Tool for decision makers to map people and services to assess and improve the alignment between them. In partnership with SPC, UNFPA worked with its regional technical partner, ABC International Development to document the key achievements and learnings of CAPI and geo referenced technology.

The regional approach to data collection created synergies and economies of scale, strengthened user-producer dialogue, promoted international standards, methodologies and use of technology. It allowed UNFPA and SPC to reach more countries with a wider range of tools than would have been possible if each country had been approached separately. A final clean census dataset is available for 5 countries including Kiribati, RMI, Tonga, Vanuatu and Samoa. Monographs on youth, gender and disability for Vanuatu and Kiribati are under progress from the census data sets and should be available by end June 2023.

UNFPA collaboration with UNICEF and SPC in the MICS brings added value on Sexual Reproductive Health (SRH) & Reproductive Rights and Violence Against Women (VAW) data. Analytical reports on SRH and domestic violence are under progress in the four countries (Kiribati, Samoa, Tonga and Tuvalu) from the MICS data and should be finalized by June 2023.

Indicators	Target Countries (Until June 2023)	Progress until December 2022	Comments
5.1 MICS Report on SRH, Domestic Violence	Cook Islands Fiji Deeper Analysis Reports(Samoa, Tonga and Tuvalu) Vanuatu	Cook Islands-Postponed to 2024 Fiji: Yes Samoa, Tonga & Tuvalu: Yes Vanuatu: Under progress	Fiji: Two standard reports: Snapshots and Full Report were released in August 2022. To be edited and formatted in 2023 Vanuatu: On-going technical support. MICS proposed for Q2 2023.
5.2 Clean Census Data Set	Cook Islands FSM Kiribati Vanuatu	Cook Islands: Yes FSM: Postponed to 2023 Kiribati: Yes Vanuatu: Yes Samoa, RMI, Tonga: Yes Tuvalu: Under Progress	Kiribati and Vanuatu clean data sets available. Preliminary and other PHC products have been published. RMI, Samoa and Tonga also available. Tuvalu will complete data collection and data processing in Q1 and Q2, 2023
5.3 Census Data: Monographs on youth, gender and disability	Fiji and Vanuatu	Fiji and Vanuatu: Both under progress	Delays due to human resource capacities at the National Statistical Offices to engage with and collaborate with the technical experts to develop the monographs. Will be completed, edited and formatted for release in Q2 2023. Census Atlas to be developed for Vanuatu.

Challenges, Lessons Learned, Best Practices

Challenges, lessons learned, opportunities and best practices for the 2022 period.

The COVID-19 pandemic continued to affect delivery of in-country technical support to countries during 2022 due to travel restrictions and gradual, very measured, return to a "new normal". This may have impacted quality of results where independent on-the-ground quality control by technical agencies is important. Countries continued to post-poner their census as they tried to "catch-up" with other outstanding data collection activities, for example, FSM postponed its census and Vanuatu its MICS to 2023. Communication with counterparts remained a challenge and several logistical challenges were experienced as supply chains were disrupted, particularly with procurement of tablets for data collection.

Limited involvement of national stakeholders in the data collection process creates a lack of demand for data and sub-optimal use of existing and emerging data. As data is not actively promoted as a public good, access to the emerging census datasets remains a challenge.

Frequent changes among key national stakeholders require repetitive efforts at advocacy and capacity building. Continuity of program implementation poses a major problem in Vanuatu, where political changes impact the availability of champions and technical staff.

Lessons learned opportunities and best practices

The institutionalization of the regional data collection plan through the Strategic Framework for Pacific Statistics 2022-2030 will streamline and harmonize the processes across the different countries in the Pacific and make them more efficient. UNFPA will continue to collaborate with SPC and UNICEF to enhance user-producer dialogue, roll out CAPI and geo-referenced technology and to support the knowledge transfer and sharing of lessons learnt.

It was a challenge to engage countries early enough in the data collection process particularly under the pandemic circumstances. For the next round of censuses, SPC and UNFPA need to encourage early regional level Census planning and preparations. Late planning makes it more challenging to support several countries at the same time particularly since most countries operate with sub-optimal levels of both human and financial resources.

Capacity building is an essential element to building ownership as it enables the stakeholders to advocate for improved data quality and advance the technical work and this initial capacity building takes time. In this context, countries can benefit from more practical regional activities which bring them together to progress the work and to share experiences. In-country support mechanisms including high level support to ensure availability of resource also take time to establish.

More emphasis on visibility of results such as the dissemination workshops and advocacy videos is needed.

Sustainability of the Programme (PUNOs to provide inputs)

Through this initiative, UNFPA has built a very strong working relationship with SPC and helped SPC to strengthen its support to the countries. Though continued collaboration, the Census and MICS efforts can be institutionalized through the regional data collection plan of the Strategic Framework for Pacific Statistics 2022-2030 as this would streamline and harmonize the processes across the different countries in the Pacific and make them more efficient. UNFPA will continue to collaborate with SPC and UNICEF to enhance user-producer dialogue which will create both demand and supply for high quality

and timely data, encourage the use of the data in decision making and policy development, and support the knowledge transfer and sharing of lessons learnt.

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Contextual Shifts and Implementation Status

The current reporting period was marked by five general elections in the Cooks, Nauru, Papua New Guinea, Vanuatu and Fiji, which for the last two ones brought major political changes. In most of the countries, the (anti)corruption narrative was a key element of the debate for both the incumbents and the opposition, so significant changes in the anti-corruption landscape are to be expected in the coming months. While it is hard to predict the developments, this could include: reform of the public service and change in leadership in key commissions/authorities; Parliament enhanced scrutiny or retroactive request for missing annual report (example of the failure to lodge annual report by FICAC for the last 4 years); heightened scrutiny in dealings undertaken by the previous administration which could lead to prosecution, delays or on the contrary acceleration for national anti-corruption strategy, halt to existing anti-corruption policies/initiatives.

Major political events also affected the region and the geo-political environment, including the postponement of the elections in Solomon Islands to 2024, the removal of the Chief Justice and High Court judges in Kiribati and ransom cyber-attack in Vanuatu. While those are not directly corruption- related they have a potential of influencing the environment in which corruption can thrive by affecting the rule of law. It is in this particular context, that the 6th Media Summit was held in Honiara, recognizing the key role of independent media in providing contextual and critical information which balance out messages from state-controlled entities. In Solomons, as it is also the case in various other countries in the Pacific, local media outlets have the highest level of online penetration and engagement and internet connectivity and social media use are growing rapidly.

This reporting period was marked by a reopening of the borders without restriction in a great number of Pacific countries. This brought about greater opportunity to re-engage in person but also a renewed pressure on staff and capacity restricted administration to engage with issues that had been de-prioritize during the Covid crisis and to attend numerous face-to-face workshop/seminars abroad. So while, we could travel again into those countries, our stakeholders travel out far more, thus constraining our capacity to actually meet. Some of the engagement conducted in New Zealand or in the USA were constrained by visa issuance delays. COVID-19 and its effects continued to challenge implementation. With still limited or/ no travel possible, this reporting period has required the UN-PRAC team to continue to be innovative in implementation. While there has been an increased uptake of electronic platforms, the previous two years of the pandemic had shown the limitations of virtual engagement. More face-to-face interactions picked up in the second half of the year.

During the reporting period, UN-PRAC remained fully dedicated to implementing the envisaged activities, responding to new requests, and adjusting to the emerging circumstances. Overall, all targets have been either achieved or exceeded while ensuring continued relevance for Pacific partners and reconfirming the quality of the design of the programme. Some of the ongoing activities will be finalized in the first half of 2023 and supplemented with the additional funding received.

Overall, in 2022 UN-PRAC continued to make notable headway with substantial efforts to work with key government agencies as well as non-governmental organizations, youth in particular to ensure a more effective whole-of-society approach to addressing corruption.

Achievements of the Fund

Outcome-Level Results

Results

UN-PRAC Project aims to support Pacific Island countries (PICs) to strengthen their national integrity systems - to promote 'clean' governments and to create an enabling environment for trade, business, investment and sustainable development.

UN-PRAC's most significant achievement was the shattering of the taboo that barred discussion of corruption. The topic is now out in the open and the fight against has been elevated as a regional commitment through the Teieniwa vision. The fact that corruption is now more openly discussed and grassroots monitoring/investigative journalism have started to show positive results, demonstrate the beginning of a cultural shift. All the countries in the region have exhibited some degree of political will to address corruption, however they have generally done so in the recent past, leaving limited time and capacity to assess the effects and impact of their efforts. Nevertheless, key actions in the fight against corruption have paved the way to achieve sustainability and ensuring that the public discussion on corruption will be continued by Pacific voices: establishment of a long-term vision, regional coordinated approach combined with national level engagement through UNCAC ratification and development of NACS. Those building blocks being now in place, it is thus essential to continue to foster a broad base participation in the fight against corruption, for this battle to be sustainable.

Outcome Indicator: UNCAC reviews by PICTs completed and recommendations prioritized

Baseline: 14 PICTs have acceded to UNCAC
6 PICTs completed the first and second review cycles
7 PICTs completed the first review cycle

Target: All UNCAC reviews completed by PICTs

Progress against target:
14 PICTs have acceded to UNCAC
13 PICTs completed the first review cycle
7 PICTs completed the second review cycle

Outcome Indicator: Number of national AC strategies established and implemented by PICs

Baseline: 3 PICTs adopted NACS - Kiribati, Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands; 3 have begun process to adopt - Federated States of Micronesia, Tuvalu and Vanuatu

Target: 3 PICTs are implementing and monitoring their NACS; 1 PIC has adopted its NACS - FSM; 3 PICS are at advanced stage of development of their NACS - Tuvalu, Cook Islands and Vanuatu

Progress against target: FSM adopted a NACS ; Cooks is now drafting its new NACS (it had been dormant for 5 years); Vanuatu has provided an AC mandate to the Ombudsman and the Public Prosecutor, Kiribati is reviewing its NACS; Fiji received policy advice and indicated commitment to prepare NACS.

Highlights of achievements – anti-corruption policy, institutional and knowledge support

Promoting international and regional knowledge exchange on anti-corruption:

- UNPRAC has put at the centre of its action the need for a coordinated regional approach to addressing corruption, which was one of the key rationales behind the drafting of the Teieniwa Vision. The Priority Implementation Matrix for the Teieniwa Vision was presented for Members' consideration during the last Forum Official Committee Sub-Committee on regional security (FSRS) meeting which took place in November 2022, in a hybrid format.
- Promoting bilateral exchanges between institutions for knowledge-sharing
- Australian Public Sector Anti-Corruption Conference (APSACC): A major outcome of the conference and Pacific activities was a commitment from Pacific practitioners to establish a Pacific community of practice for officials in the Pacific Islands who are working on similar anti-corruption initiatives aimed to facilitate further learning and knowledge-sharing in the Pacific. A range of new opportunities are now emerging as an outcome of the conference which will be followed up. With Support from UNDP, all the Pacific integrity attendees (from Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu) were individually able to report at the event on their current national integrity activities. (APSSAC is the Australia's premier corruption prevention forum and the biennial conference also includes technical knowledge as well as networking opportunities for Pacific integrity practitioners).
- Development of knowledge products and methodologies to inform policy making including Advisory Notes on: 1) COVID-19 and Corruption in the Pacific; 2) COVID-19: Exacerbating the Threat of Corruption to Human Rights and Sustainable Development in PICs; 3) Whistle-blower protections and corruption reporting in PICs; 4) Corruption risks in Public Procurement in the context of COVID-19 in PICs; 5) Breaking the silence on gender and corruption; 6) Integrity and Sport for Pacific; 7) Upgraded Pacific Youth Anti-Corruption Toolkit, and 8) Corruption risk assessment methodology for Solomon Islands. Under finalization are different types of knowledge products on public reporting, people effectiveness, sustainable development and corruption; and health and corruption to be finalized by June 2023.
- The Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions (OPP) of Solomon Islands joined the Global Operational Network of Anti-Corruption Law Enforcement Authorities (GlobE Network) as its 123th member in October 2022 (direct outcome of the Regional Anti-Corruption Conference for Law Enforcement Professionals in Southeast Asia in August 2022)
- Recognizing that integrity in sport begins with the youth, the UN-PRAC produced the Integrity and Sport for Pacific Youth Toolkit¹ to help eradicating corruption in sport. Sport has been acknowledged as a very powerful tool in the fight against corruption and the pursuit of integrity, justice and sustainable development, and Pacific Sports Ministers have recognised the role that youth sport can play in boosting national governance and integrity. Youth need to be given the space and learnings so as they can recognize what constitutes corruption and how it can impact integrity in their own countries and provinces – sport is a great vehicle for the youth to engage on this.

1

https://www.unodc.org/roseap/uploads/documents/pacific/2022/Integrity_Sport_for_Pacific_Youth_toolkit.FIN_AL_6.22.pdf



Launch of the Integrity and Sport for Pacific Youth Toolkit in Honiara on 27 September 2022

NACS and anti-corruption Policy

- Review of the corruption court cases in Fiji, Palau, Kiribati, Vanuatu which led to key discussions with agencies involved on anti-corruption on sentencing guidelines, asset management and recovery, link between criminal sentencing and administrative sanctions and lessons learned from establishing a dedicated corruption court.
- In line with paragraph 1 of article 5 of the UNCAC, the Cook Islands initiated work to develop a NACS, which had been dormant for five years. UNODC has been supporting the Cook Islands with the provision of technical inputs, support of a dedicated national personnel, organization of consultation and establishment of the implementation and monitoring of the national strategy, in close consultation with the members of the Anti-Corruption Committee. The draft NACS was published in the Cook Islands Newspaper in July 2022 for public comments and is now for final endorsement with the ACC. Anti-corruption issues were at the forefront of the discussion preceding the elections, a local poll conducted prior to the election found that for 39% of the respondents the most pressing issue facing the country was finance mismanagement and corruption.
- The Vanuatu Council of Minister (CoM) endorsed in December 2021, the establishment of an Anti-Corruption Authority. Recognising that Vanuatu, like many small island developing countries has limited resources and therefore a limited revenue base, the CoM has decided that the UNCAC articles 6 and 36 functions would be shared between two agencies rather than creating a new single specialised agency. Based on the request of the Public Prosecutor and following in country consultations in July 2022 with the Vanuatu authorities (Public Prosecutor, Vanuatu Law Commission, State Law Office, Financial

Intelligence Unit, Right to Information Unit, and the Leader of the Opposition, NGOS/CSO involved in anti-corruption and the Vanuatu Chamber of Commerce) UNODC prepared a policy paper to assist in drafting the anti-bribery and the whistle-blower bills and establishing the authority.

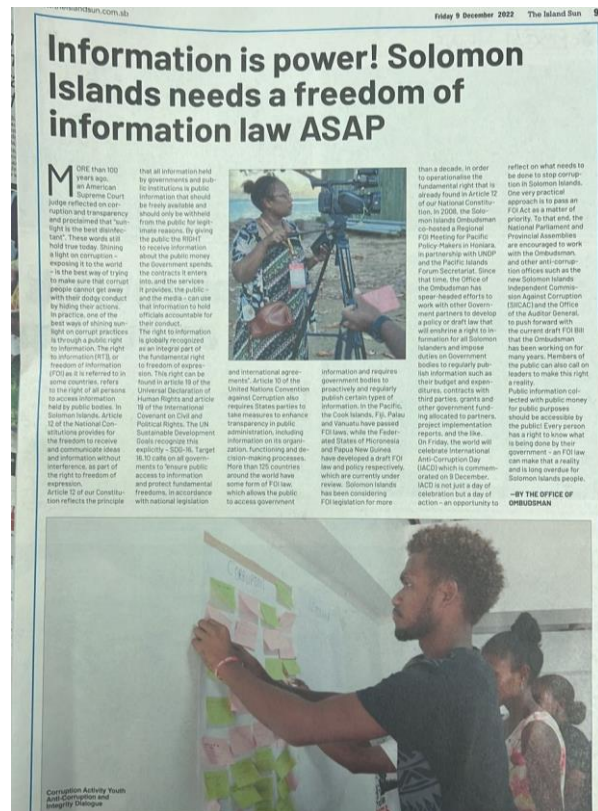
-
- The UNDP-supported corruption risk assessment methodology has been piloted at the Ministry of Agriculture and Lands in Solomon Islands. The methodology will be further sustained by SIICAC, included in the new National Anti-Corruption Strategy (NACS) and reflected in the Memoranda of Understanding between SIICAC and other integrity institutions.

Highlights of achievements - Right to Information (RTI) – Freedom of Information (FOI) policy impact

- **FSM:** FSM President Panuelo submitted the Nation's first FOI Act for consideration by the Congress. The UN-PRAC team provided advisory/technical support to the Act.
- **Samoa:** Right to Information policy advisory services have been provided to Samoa, leading to commitment by the Samoan Public Service Commission to work on development of a RTI Bill in 2023 with support from the project.
- **Vanuatu:** Based on prior policy support for adoption of RTI Policy and legislation, an online portal for the Vanuatu's Right to Information allowing the public to make information requests and ensuring effective RTI across the Government and all public offices was completed by UNDP. The system includes a content management system (CMS) that allows officers in the RTIU and other government agencies to publish and edit content. This means officers can meet the statutory timeframes in the RTI Act (e.g. the section 14 requirement to acknowledge a request within five days and the section 16 requirement to respond to the request within 30 days) and send reminders to agencies regarding these requirements. The CMS also allows the RTIU to monitor and track requests and access user/visitor data and analytics. In addition, it includes a reporting tool that allows the RTIU to produce reports on requests received, agency response rates, adherence to timeframes, and other matters. RTI Unit committed to taking over the hosting and sustaining the portal beyond the project however due to the hacked system in Vanuatu, this has been delayed. The formal launch is expected to take place in early 2023. The year has seen an increase in pro-active disclosures from government administration and also the recruitment of staff inside the administration with a specific RTO portfolio, which demonstrate an interest in the administration to be more pro-active in information release. A positive example of this pro-active disclosure is the live streaming of the Parliamentary Account Committee.
- **Niue:** In partnership with the Niue Government, activities were initiated by UNDP to raise awareness and encourage Members of Parliament, government officials and those involved in policymaking and information sharing, to consider developing RTI legislation or policy. This was preceded by UNDP's cooperation with the Media Broadcasting Corporation of Niue, on 4 March 2022 when UNDP was invited to present on the Right to Information and Freedom of Information to the Members of the Niue Legislative Assembly, Public Service Commissioners and Secretary to Government.
- **Tonga:** Support was provided by UNDP to the Office of the Ombudsman of Tonga to improve the digitalization of its services and pro-active public reporting functions. Specifically, with the mission to provide an impartial and effective complaints resolution services to everyone in Tonga, stakeholder needs and interests consultations identified that the Ombudsman Office required a revised and enhanced website that provided an online complaints system to enable citizens to lodge complaints regarding any Government services that fall within the jurisdiction of the Ombudsman's Office and thereby improve public reporting through enhanced access to official information. Previously, the complaints form was available as a printable hard copy that needed to be submitted separately to the Office. In addition to

making it easier for the public to lodge complaints online, the upgraded website and new functionality allows for better recording and analysis of complaints lodged and official responses, and improved public reporting of the Tonga Ombudsman Office. The resulting highly accessible [website](#) complies with Tonga's official Disability Policy and is designed for low-bandwidth users, compliant with W3C standards, secure, and allows for machine language translation (although the primary language is English).

- Solomon Islands:** Strategic dialogue was initiated by UNDP with the Ombudsman in Solomon Islands based on request for support towards advancement of the RTI policy and legislative agenda. As part of International Anti-Corruption Day (IACD 2022) a newspaper article on the need for Freedom of Information (FOI) Legislation by the Office of the Ombudsman. The article makes the point for the need for such legislation that allows the public to access government information, requires government bodies to proactively and regularly publish certain types of information, so the public can use that information to hold officials accountable for their conduct. The project will continue working with the Office of the Ombudsman to review, update the draft FOI legislation, planned to be tabled in Parliament at the end of 2023.



- To maximize the impact and contribute to regional effectiveness and coordination, UNDP established a strategic partnership with the Pacific Community (SPC) and its Pacific Data Hub Project in delivery of a series of Open Data, Data Analysis and Dissemination for Good Governance webinars, which took place on 3, 10 and 17 March 2022. UNDP's substantive contributions focused on the linkages between the RTI and open data and their values for improved transparency, integrity, and anti-corruption.

Highlights of achievements – promoting public sector integrity and people effectiveness

- In Fiji,** the nation-wide public integrity and anti-bribery campaign led by FICAC and UNDP continued to expand, diversify and scale up in Fiji across various sectors and stakeholders, including at municipal levels. As per the data collected and monitored by FICAC, a total of 3,472 participants have been covered (1,984 male, 1,430 female, with 253 participants not specifying their gender on the evaluation forms). By December 2022, a total of 51 institutions have undergone the trainings and awareness campaign. Of this, 29 institutions were from Central division, 19 from the Western division, and 3 institutions from the Northern division. A total of 44 institutions remains to be covered. A total of 337 awareness sessions were conducted with officers from the Central, Western and Northern divisions. Of this, 158 awareness sessions were conducted in the Central division alone, 137 sessions were conducted in the Western division, and 42 sessions were conducted in the Northern division. The campaign will continue in 2023.



Caption: Ministry of Employment Officer joining “ I don’t accept bribes’ campaign in Fiji, November 2022

- An innovative integrity and ethics methodology was developed by UNDP in cooperation with New Zealand’s Public Service Fale and will be made available across the Pacific region. The methodology, which have now been piloted and validated in cooperation with Fiji Independent Commission Against Corruption (FICAC) serve as a framework that can be used and adapted by agencies and public institutions throughout the Pacific. The methodology can help accompany, reinforce and/or complement policy, regulatory and practical efforts and initiatives aimed at promoting integrity and ethics in the Pacific either at regional level (through the Fale public service programme) or country-specific level (through the respective PPSCs or other pertinent entities) including other existing codes of ethics and conduct, public integrity and ethics campaigns and initiatives undertaken by other line institutions such as anti-corruption commissions or other integrity institutions and specific jurisdictions. The application of the methodology allows public institutions and agencies to self-reflect on the values of integrity and ethics, identify gaps and best practices in ethics and integrity, establish baselines and metrics, agree on an improvement plan, and periodically measure progress towards achieving better outcomes. The methodology is now being transformed into an online e-course to be offered by the Fale to all public service commissions across the Pacific.

- In addition, UNDP supported the Fale in its knowledge sharing and capacity-building efforts targeting Pacific public service commissions on the topic of accountability and whistleblower protection. This knowledge was made widely available to all Pacific public service commissions through the Fale’s learning platform.

- **Samoa:** A study on public sector engagement concluded with 2952 (56.4 Female 43.6 % Male) respondents, the equivalent of 30% of all public sector employees in Samoa with some agencies/institutions attaining 100% response rate. Focus Group discussions and interventions based on the finding are ongoing. UNODC with the Samoa Public Service Commission (PSC), launched this research study combined with desk research, interviews, focus group discussions and surveys on ways to enhance people effectiveness in public service administrations in Samoa. This engagement blends the experience of Demos in transformative, governance, of Kayma in behavioral insights and data analytics and of UNODC in integrity and anti-corruption; and is capitalizing on standard questionnaire module comparing aspects of work and organisational engagement, and public service motivation. By understanding what drives intrinsic and extrinsic motivation in public service work and having

open discussions and training about interventions, we seek to spark ideas about reforms and new practices that increase public sector work engagement. We also expect to provide tools to the HR departments in Samoa to be able to autonomously investigate, develop and test interventions to increase levels of work engagement.



Samoa Public Service Commission added 12 new photos from September 21 at 6:00 PM.
Sep 22 · 🌐

As part of the Samoa Public Sector Engagement program, focus groups were introduced during Phase Two of the... See more



Pictures of the Focus Group Discussions held in Samoa in September 2022

- Solomon Islands:** An inter-institutional dialogue on diagnosis of regulatory and practical challenges, opportunities, and identification of ways forward for public service excellence and solutions for pro-integrity and more efficient public service was organized. The dialogue was led by the Ministry of Public Service and SIICAC and supported by UNDP. This dialogue was informed by the public integrity and ethics methodology mentioned above, which aims to serve as a practical tool for monitoring the implementation of existing regulatory frameworks, including Codes of Ethics/Codes of Conduct. During this process, UNDP also facilitated the sharing of the experiences of FICAC related to implementation of the public integrity and anti-bribery campaign.
- Kiribati** – Based on the expansion of its mandate, the Public Service Office of Kiribati has initiated with UNODC support an inter-institutional dialogue on investigation of corruption in the public service, and knowledge exchange with FICAC. Recognising the lack of methodological guidance and resource constraints preventing the countries from gathering reliable anti-corruption data and measuring progress and the specific concern that Kiribati had on the Global Corruption Barometer published in 2021, UNODC partnered with the Kiribati PSO to deliver a workshop on measurement of corruption. The workshop which convened

public service employees including from the National Statistics office (14 Female and 9 Male) looked at how to gather reliable anti-corruption data and measure progress. Increasing the capacity of Kiribati institutions to fight corruption and thus, in the long term, contribute to ensuring that corruption is not eroding the development results attained is of significance.

- **Samoa:** In partnership with the Ministry of Justice and Courts Administration in Samoa, UNDP Samoa provided support for judiciary integrity of the civil, criminal and customary court system by enhancing the efficiency of the existing court's case management system and improving client services and processes.

- **Highlights of achievements - improved media capacities and reporting on anti-corruption**

- A partnership was established with the Pacific Islands News Association (PINA) to build the capacities of journalists and assist in the provision of more accurate analysis of corruption-related Pacific reporting, resulting in the creation of the Pacific Anti-Corruption Journalists Network (PACJN) and knowledge sharing on topics including RTI, corruption in sport, SDGs, and digital transformation. In addition, training and workshop on sport and corruption, public finance management, the Teienewa vision were delivered to Pacific journalists. This includes but is no limited to: on World Press Freedom Day on Tuesday, 3 May 2022, PACJN hosted a hybrid media training on the 'Media role in Freedom of Information'. On 31 May, under the partnership with UNODC, PACJN and PINA organised jointly with the Media Association of Tonga a webinar on the Media Role in Freedom of Information. PACJN also supported a media training on investigative financial reporting for Palau journalists on 29 August in Koror and two media dialogues in Kiribati and Papua New Guinea on 07 and 20 October, respectively. A key component of the 2022 project is to better support individual Pacific journalists in their own countries to better undertake corruption-linked investigative stories. Both the dialogues were themed on the role of the media in monitoring integrity commitments in the Teieniwa Vision

- As a result of continuous advocacy and capacity-building efforts, anti-corruption was spotlighted at the PINA 6th Media Summit in September 2022. Given that the Summit focused on the digital revolution and transforming threats into opportunities, UN-PRAC also contributed to the dialogue on the role of journalism and technology in the fight against corruption. As part of the Summit, Solomon Islands jointly organised by PINA and the Media Association of Solomon Islands (MASI), PACJN with UNODC convened two pre-summit workshops for representatives of National Media Associations (NMAs) from Fiji, Palau, Niue, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu. The two one day workshops – on Monday 26 September and Tuesday 27 September 2022 were on the theme “The role of the media in investigating the management of public resources” and “Reporting on sports integrity and corruption in Pacific Sport.”

- In 2022, an increasing number of corruption-related stories were published. In January 2022, Solomon Islands journalist and PACJN member Eremae Ofani published a significant investigation into logging and corruption. <https://theislandsun.com.sb/isabel-landowners-fight-for-ownership-over-tubi-logs/> In June 2022, he received the Media Association of Solomon Islands (MASI) Investigative Journalist Award for his work. This UN-PRAC investigative article was funded as one of the four PACJN UN-PRAC 2021 grants. PACJN and UNODC are preparing now to advertise the new funding round of grants to be offered in the second half of 2022. The other three 2021 grantees, Bernadette Carreon, Kalafi Moala and Rosi Doviverata have also produced significant anti-corruption journalism in the first half of 2022. Through the PACJN project, PACJN journalists are also engaging in enhanced investigative work through partnerships with the Organised Crime and Corruption Reporting Project (OCCRP)'s Pacific office and blending their anti-corruption skills into their environmental reporting. As well as an

increase in reporting in traditional media, there has also been an increase in anti-corruption and integrity reporting in local Pacific languages through online video media, such as the weekly Udesuall Program on [Palau Wave Productions - YouTube](#)

- UNDP has continued working on anti-corruption media awareness and improved media capacities for anti-corruption reporting, including in the context of Agenda 2030 and SDGs in close cooperation with the UNDP Global Anti-Corruption Team. On 10 May, a knowledge session was organized for Pacific media and civil society which aimed to sensitize Pacific media and civil society on the links between corruption and sustainable development, notably through Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 16 which calls for stronger action on anti-corruption, transparency and accountability. This complements current UNDP activities in the Pacific building the capacity of Pacific media and CSOs in reporting on anti-corruption, integrity, UNCAC, SDG16 and related themes.
- 8 scholarships for journalists from Fiji, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu were provided by UNDP to undertake the Ethics and Anti-Corruption in Oceania short course from the Fiji National University (FNU) online between 8 August and 16 September. The course contributed to journalists to better understand and report on corruption and integrity issues in the Pacific. Representatives from the New Zealand Fale were among the guest lecturers at the FNU anti-corruption course.
- In Niue, UNDP partnered with the Niue Media Council to present a media panel on how media can use RTI and Open Government to create a culture of transparency and accountability within the government.

Highlights of achievements – unprecedented engagement of youth against corruption

- Since 2021, the project has set new standards for youth to give voices in the region by developing a youth movement focused on good governance, integrity, anti-corruption and right to information. Important milestones were achieved through key successful regional events. One of them was the Pacific Youth Summit, first convened in 2021, organized by the University of the South Pacific Students' Association (USPSA) and UNDP. The Summit has become an annual event of the region-wide forum of youth sharing their knowledge, good advocacy practices and commitment to developing anti-corruption movement in the Pacific gaining further momentum in 2022. Over 1,000 Pacific youth leaders, students and young professionals at [the Pacific Youth Summit 2022](#) highlighted the connections between anti-corruption and sustainable development and boosted the ambitions of the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent to address regional disaster risk reduction efforts and the global climate emergency.

Chon Pakoa from Vanuatu was among them who became aware of the impact of corruption on climate change adaptation in the Pacific, and the important role young people play in that. “This event broadened my take on how corruption has been a factor affecting climate change, which is a big issue for the people in the Pacific region since we are surrounded by the ocean.” “Going forward from this event, I want to join my Pacific family in fighting corruption and climate change. We need to work together and find solutions so that our Pacific is corruption-resilient.”



Chon Pakoa from Vanuatu





Makelita Sio from Tuvalu

For Makelita Sio from Tuvalu, who participated in the Pacific Youth Summit both in 2021 and 2022, the event was also a power spot for exchanging solidarity and renewing commitment to anti-corruption advocacy across the region.

“As a young woman, I feel empowered by the messages from the Pacific Youth Summit which made me realize that I have the right to be informed, I have the power to make a change and fight corruption.”

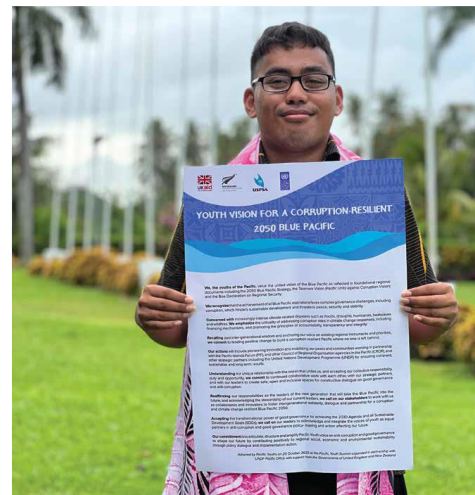
“Knowing that I have the youth leaders by my side, I am confident, we will work together towards a corruption-resilient Pacific.”

Bete Tiaeki Tioti was among the youth leaders participated from Kiribati. His engagement in the Pacific Youth Summit

has transformed his view on how he sees corruption in his country.

“I used to think that I have no say in what the Government does, but after attending the Pacific Youth Summit, I have realized that I have a say in every decision my Government makes.”

The participants adopted the [‘Youth Vision for a Corruption-Resilient Blue Pacific’](#), a formal articulation of youth commitment to a corruption-resilient Pacific and constructive collaboration towards coherent, sustainable and long-term results in close partnership with Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) and other Council of Regional Organisation agencies in the Pacific (CROP) for ensuring coherent, sustainable and long-term results.



Bete Tiaeki Tioti from Kiribati

The Vision clearly recognizes the Teieniwa Vision, along with other relevant regional commitments including the 2050 Blue Pacific Strategy, and the Boe Declaration on Regional Security.

The leadership taken by youth in the Pacific was welcomed by Mr Henry Puna, Secretary General of the Pacific Islands Forum, the region’s premier political and economic policy organisation. “Such a welcome news, especially in youth leadership for regional solidarity - youth are not waiting, they are moving and leading on regionalism. Congratulations to all involved in the 2022 Pacific Youth Summit and this magnificent achievement!”

In December 2022, the Pacific youth anti-corruption movement gained global prominence at the global stage, when [they shared the Pacific Youth Vision at the 20th International Anti-Corruption Conference](#), the world biggest forum in the fight against corruption hosted by the Transparency International in Washington, D.C.



Aneet Kumar, USPSA Deputy Secretary General, who coordinated the voices of Pacific youth at the regional and global forums said, “USPSA, in partnership with UNDP, has built a dynamic youth anti-corruption movement. This year, we move further forward, to formalize the youth intervention in the regional policy making mechanism in collaboration with the Pacific Islands Forum.”

Aneet Kumar, USPSA Deputy Secretary General (second from the left) at the IACC with youth participants from the Pacific.

- **In Fiji**, scaling up of the integrity campaign among youth and in the education sector continued with a series of Young Leaders seminars organized by FICAC were supported by UNDP involving over 120 students from the Central, Northern and Western division of Fiji. The seminars resulted in drafting of a Code of Conduct to guide and assist secondary schools in Fiji.



Young Leaders' Seminar, Nadi, 2022

- Following earlier work in Fiji, Solomon Islands, Palau and Samoa, in 2022, the business integrity work among young entrepreneurs was further scaled up in **Niue** based on the methodology of UNDP's Business Integrity Toolkit for Young Entrepreneurs. An outcome statement for the Niue youth workshop is being finalized by the Niue Chamber of Commerce to consolidate the findings and messages of the workshop for Youth Entrepreneurs to take the agreed actions and ideas forward in 2023.



Business integrity workshop with youth, Niue, November 2022

- Recognising that the issue of ethics and integrity are intrinsically linked to larger societal issues, UNODC has been providing awareness raising sessions on drug and transnational organised crime issues to Integrity Fiji, which will be weaving those subjects in the ethics awareness raising they conduct with youth in communities. UNODC continued the outreach with Tuvalu Ministry of Sport on the development of a code of conduct for youth. This

activity requires a face-to-face intervention and due to closure of the borders, it will be conducted when border reopens.

- An upgraded Pacific Youth Anti-Corruption Toolkit: Integrity in Action was launched in June 2022². This Toolkit is the result of a partnership between UN-PRAC and APTC. This updated Toolkit builds on UN-PRAC and APTC's work with young people and is designed to help youth with their advocacy against corruption. It recognizes that youth creativity and energy as advocates for integrity, transparency and accountability are paramount to addressing corruption.
- The Pacific voice has been included in the recently launched UNODC's "Global Resource for Anti-Corruption Education and Youth Empowerment (GRACE) initiative" launched in 2022 Recognizing that integrity in sport begins with the youth, the UN-PRAC produced the Integrity and Sport for Pacific Youth Toolkit³ to help eradicating corruption in sport. Sport has been acknowledged as a very powerful tool in the fight against corruption and the pursuit of integrity, justice and sustainable development, and Pacific Sports Ministers have recognised the role that youth sport can play in boosting national governance and integrity.
- UNODC initiated at the beginning of 2022, a partnership with the Palau Special Prosecutor Office aimed at improving the accessibility of governmental information and strengthening the public outreach. In Palau, local youth have been involved in UNODC supported initiatives. Palau young entrepreneurs undertook a workshop with the Palau Chamber of Commerce and UNODC on 2 August to increase the number of young entrepreneurs engaging with integrity activities. This covered students from the five Palau high schools.
- Under UN-PRAC, UNODC has initiated a partnership with the Kiribati Public Service Office (SPO) aimed at fostering the outreach and advocacy capacity of the PSO with support to awareness and youth advocacy event. This activity will contribute to the implementation of KV20, specifically its pillar 4 on governance. During our visit in October, UNODC met with the Kiribati Family Health Association, KFHA who started a youth group against corruption. They presented the music/theatre skit that will be shown in Betio, Bairiki, Nanikaai, Teaoraereke, Ambo, Taborio, Eita, Bikenibeu, Nowerewere, Temwaiku and Bonriki. This mixes theatre play, traditional and contemporary dances and incorporated strong anti-corruption messages. By working in collaboration with this youth group which through its original mandate has established durable network, strong reach in the communities, the anti-corruption message will benefit from the valuable experience the group has garnered in engaging with communities around difficult issues.

²https://www.unodc.org/roseap/uploads/documents/pacific/2022/Pacific_Youth_Anti-Corruption_Toolkit.UN-PRAC.2022.05.24.pdf and <https://www.undp.org/pacific/press-releases/pacific-youth-anti-corruption-toolkit-upgraded>

³

https://www.unodc.org/roseap/uploads/documents/pacific/2022/Integrity_Sport_for_Pacific_Youth_toolkit.FIN_AL_6.22.pdf



KFHA performance in Tarawa, Kiribati on 6 October 2022

- To observe the IACD 2022 in Solomon Islands, UNDP delivered a comprehensive set of advocacy, public education and awareness activities. The activities combined multiple media channels to reach the broadest audience possible across the country with anti-corruption messages. These included TV, print and radio, as well as outreach activities in the Central province involving government, education institutions, and the public. The activities included a 7-day campaign using the radio platform to provide messaging on the radio on the theme of anti-corruption day and the role of SIICAC. A complementary 7-day campaign using the mobile network platform to provide messaging via text messages on the theme of anti-corruption day and the role of SIICAC was organized. Four different text blasts were sent on anti-corruption topics to **20 000 people**. A sample of the messages are reflected below

SIICAC

SMS/MMS

Wednesday, 7 December 2022

The Anti-Corruption Act 2018 empowers the Solomon Islands Independent Commission Against Corruption (SIICAC) to prevent, investigate and prosecute corruption offences.

Fri, 9 Dec, 19:04

Corruption offences includes accepting or offering bribes and using your office for personal benefit. The punishment under the Anti-Corruption Act is \$150,000 or up to 15 years imprisonment or both.

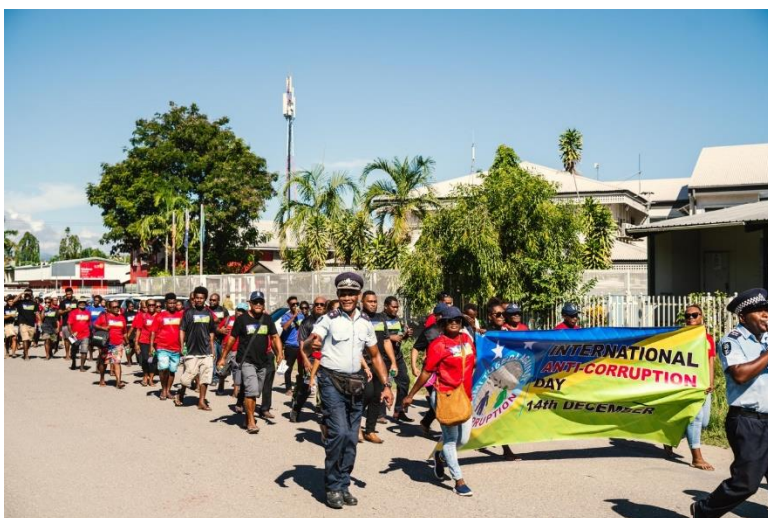
Sun, 11 Dec, 18:59

Corruption deprives you from receiving essential services like healthcare and education, and even improving our roads.

Monday 18:59

You can help us prevent corruption. Say no to bribes and call out corruption when you see it.

- Community Outreach – Central Islands Province: Supported by UNDP and co-financed with SIICAC and in partnership with other integrity agencies and Central Islands Provincial Government, a programme of community outreach, for the first time, led by SIICAC, was also organised in Central Province from 01 – 09 December 2022. The outreach program provided an opportunity for communities in Central province, to hear directly from SIICAC and other integrity agencies on their respective roles in working together to fight corruption, information sessions on what is contained under the 2018 Anti-corruption Act and the Whistle Blowers Act, aimed at encouraging the public to report corruption.
- A [parade](#) and panel discussion was held at the Provincial Capital of Tulagi. UNDP hosted presentations and a panel discussion at the Tulagi main market which saw a good turnout of people from the public and private sectors, church organisations, residents and people from the surrounding communities. The panel discussion focused on the roles and functions of SIICAC in the areas of corruption investigation and prosecutions, reporting of complaints, protections under the Whistle Blowers protection Act, and how the integrity institutions are working together in the fight against corruption. The discussions also assisted the public to understand the role and functions of SIICAC and how other participating government institutions are working together with SIICAC to combat corruption.



- March and panel discussion organized in Honiara. In an effort to empower citizens, civil society organizations (CSOs), the private sector and the Solomon Islands' Government

to take action against corruption, UNDP partnered with the SIICAC to support it in collaborating with integrity institutions, the private sector, Government Ministries and CSOs to host its first ever SIICAC led IACD event for the people of Honiara, Solomon Islands. This event began a parade, where integrity agencies, university students, CSOs and the private sector, Government Ministries walked together in recognition of this year's IACD theme: UNCAC at 20: Uniting the World Against Corruption. The panel discussion was aired live in SIBC reaching an estimated **70 000** Solomon Islanders within and outside Solomon Islands.

These comprehensive series of activities in Solomon Islands engaged people throughout the community and across all islands and provided an opportunity for citizens within the community, including institutions and people who acknowledge the disastrous effect of corruption, to have their voices heard. These activities contributed to empowerment of people already engaged on anti-corruption issues and those who recognize corruption as a problem and increased public understanding of UNDP's work and mandate in supporting countries to address corruption.

The community outreach and awareness activities also provided an opportunity to update the public on the work of SIICAC and Solomon Islands' other key integrity agencies, as well as to reinvigorated discussion on the Anti-Corruption Act 2018 and the Whistle Blower Act 2018.

- The IACD on the 9 December on the Theme "Recover with Integrity" was commemorated in various Pacific countries, some examples include: In Palau the youth have been actively involved in the IACD preparation- last anti-corruption event with youth involved 600 youth and was conducted jointly by two partner institutions the Special Prosecutor and the Chamber of Commerce; the Samoa Public Service Commission hosted a breakfast Anti-corruption Conference with senior Government officials and certificates of appreciation for the engagement survey will be handed over to the best responding public sector institutions.
- Through the partnership with the Kiribati Public Service Office, the youth of the Kiribati Family Health Association rolled out in the 10 towns of Tarawa and outer islands awareness and youth advocacy events.

Highlights of achievements – promoting gender equality through ethics and integrity

- Following earlier work in Fiji, Solomon Islands and Palau, the business integrity work with women entrepreneurs was further scaled up in Samoa and Niue. In 2022, the Samoa Chamber of Commerce in partnership launched the first-ever Anti-Corruption Toolkit for Women-Owned Micro, Small and Medium Businesses to raise anti-corruption awareness among women in businesses. This is the third such toolkit developed in the Pacific with support from the project following the example of Fiji and Palau. Altogether 30 women-owned business businesses benefited from the training in Samoa. (30 female/1 male participants). In Niue, UNDP organized a workshop to guide female business owners/operators to strengthen internal control mechanisms, ethics, and compliance in the workplace, and raise awareness of local laws and institutions used to prevent corruption in Niue. This included the drafting of the Women's



Entrepreneurs toolkit (modelling the toolkit developed in Samoa). (18 female participants). The capacity-building workshops support women entrepreneurs in understanding and learning how to implement anti-corruption practices to safeguard and combat corruption in their businesses. Further, they identify key legislation related to corruption and unethical business practices to encourage a better understanding. In 2023, with continued support from UNDP Samoa, Niue's work will continue with localizing the women entrepreneurs' toolkit and resources in both English and the local language through the Niue Chamber of Commerce.



Business integrity workshop for women entrepreneurs, Niue, November 2022

- In Fiji, UNDP continued with advocacy and promoting business integrity among women based on the key messages of the anti-corruption toolkit developed by UN-PRAC. In April 2022, UNDP established a partnership with the University of the South Pacific (USP) during the Entrepreneurial Fair 2022 to promote gender equality through anti-corruption initiatives.
- In Fiji, the public integrity campaign implemented jointly by FICAC and UNDP also continues to embrace and be scaled up in the business sector.
- The Women Entrepreneurs' Group was established in Palau, and South-South exchanges were forged with Samoan women entrepreneurs.
- Through discussion on Anti-corruption toolkit for women entrepreneurs for Palau, Women entrepreneur in Palau identified during their last workshop session the need to facilitate better risk analysis for women; and boost the ease of doing business for women entrepreneurs.

Highlights of achievements – public finance management

- In Fiji, UNDP supported the preparation and integration of the public finance and anti-corruption content of the e-course for public servants which was handed over to the Ministry of Civil Service in Fiji and is being uploaded to the Ministry's learning moodle platform. UNDP further facilitated inter-institutional cooperation and knowledge-sharing with the anti-corruption contributions made by FICAC to ensure inter-institutional coherence and alignment with national framework. The course will be offered to all public servants in Fiji as part of their

mandatory induction. The course was developed in partnership with UNDP's public finance management project funded by the EU. UNDP Pacific is complementing and reinforcing this anti-corruption work with comprehensive regional Pacific programme specifically focused on support to public finance management.

- An Integrity Committee is being set up in the **Solomon Islands** Parliament
- Regional workshop on Money Laundering and Constituency Development funds; The Global Organization of Parliamentarians Against Corruption (GOPAC) (Oceania Regional Branch) partnered with UNODC and hosted a conference from 29-30 November 2022 in the New Zealand Parliament in Wellington to discuss the use of Constituency Development Funds in several Pacific Island Countries and the systems that have been established to manage the funds. Based on lessons learned from other jurisdictions and inputs from those in the Pacific who are part of national CDF systems, the paper explores the CDF systems that are in place currently in the Pacific region and their recent reviews for example in Solomons and Tonga. Based on the juxtaposition of the two, the paper draws on findings and practical recommendations for how the CDF systems in the Pacific region can be enhanced.



CDF workshop in Wellington, 28-29 November 2022

Challenges, Lessons Learned, Best Practices

Highlight key challenges, lessons learned, opportunities and best practices for the 2022 period.

In 2022, the China and Solomon Islands Security Agreement has created a geo-political crisis in the region which highlighted that lack of transparency, accountability, restriction on media, restriction on right to information can have a direct impact on stability. Furthermore, during the year, the Pacific region has registered a number of (alleged) high-level corruption cases that have been impacting or risk to the political discourse of a number of countries, such as Tonga and Cooks. These two elements underscore that a lack of trust between institutions and with the population infects other institutions with corrupt behaviour undermining prospects for peace, stability and growth. In the long term, improvements in peace and growth are ultimately

dependent on addressing the corruption risks and mitigating its consequences. Efforts aimed at tackling corruption particularly are critically important for building sustainable peace and resilience. This places at the center stage the fight against corruption that has been recognised by the Teieniwa Vision.

The work with USPSA, and the adoption of the Pacific Youth Vision for Corruption-Resilient Blue Pacific is one of the highlights of this year because of its anchoring on regional policy documents ('Teieniwa Vision' and 2050 Blue Pacific Strategy) as well as active cooperation with CROPS agencies towards more structured and sustainable dialogue.

Though difficult, measuring corruption is necessary. It is now the right (ripe) time to move to evidence-based assessments of the effectiveness of actions and measures. Why not before?- because the anti-corruption work in the Pacific started with focusing on the question 'why' , and slowly moved to the "how" and further consolidation of the anti-corruption work. The expectations needed to be managed, indeed through the conduct a corruption survey and dissemination of the findings, the public builds expectations of actions from their institutions, but the government and their institutions in the Pacific were not in position to respond to those expectations and this could have led to misunderstanding or in worse case scenarios, unrest.

Corruption is clearly a very political topic; senior government representatives often purely assume where corruption lies and which sectors are mostly affected by corruption often without hard data. It is well known that data based on detected cases of corruption suffer considerable underreporting and they may show a biased view of actual corruption as they tend to reflect the intensity of activities by criminal justice and anticorruption bodies more than the actual extent of corruption.

Sustainability of the Programme

Highlight opportunities, plans for the sustainability of the activities/ programmes

UN-PRAC is well known for having established numerous strategic partnerships with anti-corruption and integrity institutions, CROP agencies, academia, youth organizations, media, private sector as well as for translating its knowledge in policy, advisory and analytical products. These mechanisms and tools will help in sustaining the efforts beyond the lifetime of the project.

UN-PRAC has put at the centre of its action the need for a coordinated regional approach to addressing corruption, which was one of the key rationales behind the drafting of the Teieniwa Vision. It is crucial for the issue of corruption to be rooted into a regional body that "outlives projects" and is "owned and driven" by the Pacific. This provides for sustainability, long-term vision and impact. Coordination is key so as to ensure that the support is strategic and guided by the needs of the countries. High turn-over of personnel both on the counterpart and technical assistance side is noticeable, consequently it is crucial to ensure that anti-corruption work is institutionally led, rather than associated with specific individuals.

The institutional, policy, advisory as well as the work with the non-state actors is firmly anchored on the international and regional commitments including UNCAC, Agenda 2030/SDGs, the Teieniwa Vision, Boe Declaration for Regional Security, 2050 Blue Pacific Strategy. The specific project-support efforts are also reflected in the Teieniwa Action plan which is the roadmap for implementation of the regional anti-corruption commitments.

The work with PIFS through USPSA, and the adoption of the Pacific Youth Vision for Corruption-Resilient Blue Pacific will be taken forward by USPSA and the Pacific Youth

Summit will become an annual event to provide a platform for governance and anti-corruption dialogue.

The integrity and ethics methodology developed with the Public Service Fale will be sustained through the Fale including as an e-course which is being developed.

The knowledge relating to private sector work will also be sustained through the knowledge-toolkits related to women and youth and channelling the work through Chamber of Commerce.